WORLD / A29

World's first full face transplant approved in Britain

METRO / A25

Reduced water level forces MWSS to cut back supply to Metro Manila

ENTERTAINMENT / H3,H4

Guess who came to Merk's nth birthday party? Guess who's Gardo's new housemate?

LIFESTYLE / E1

PDI's fashion/beauty beat is 1 year old; reviews biggest trends of past year

Senate to probe 'toxic' RP-Japan trade deal

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Blanche S. Rivera

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR-SANTIAGO YESTERDAY shrugged off fears by environmentalists that the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) would open the country to the entry of toxic wastes but said she would conduct an inquiry into the treaty.

SENATE/ A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, October 27, 2006 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 321 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Asean leaders to ink antiterror pact in Cebu

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO SAID YESTERDAY she expected Southeast Asian leaders to adopt an antiterrorism convention when they meet in Cebu on Dec. 11-13.

The landmark pact would call on the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations to forge a stronger front against terrorism by improving cooperation to hunt down and prosecute suspects and prevent attacks in a region regarded

ASEAN/ A12

GMA concedes SC defeat

People's initiative is dead –Miriam

By Christine O. Avendaño and Juliet Labog-Javellana

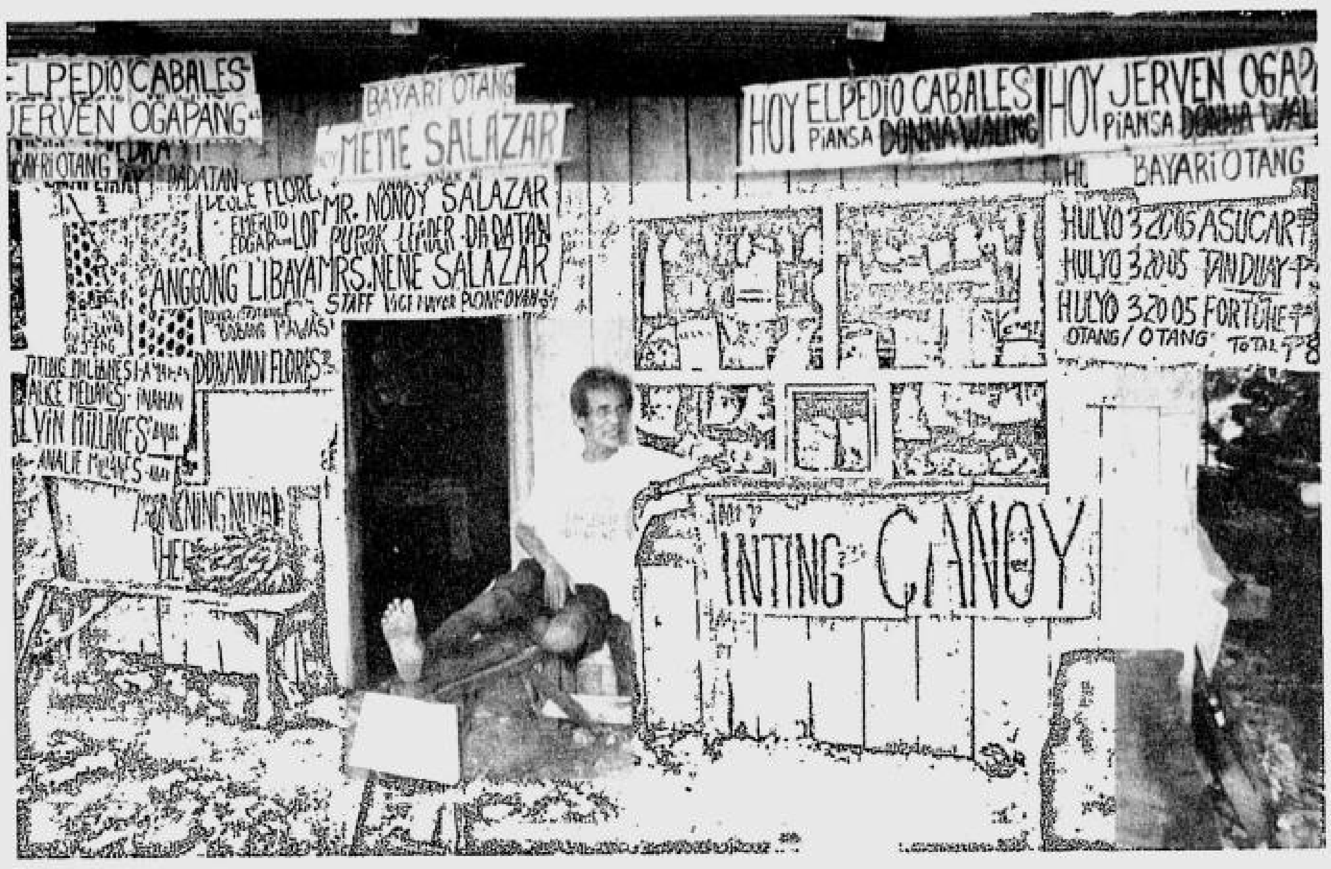
PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo yesterday urged proponents and supporters of the people's initiative petition to accept its defeat in the Supreme Court but also stressed the need to "keep the fire" of Charter change "burning."

Ms Arroyo dwelled on these points twice in separate venues as her allies in the House of Representatives and the initiative proponents pondered their next moves, including a motion for reconsideration and the so-called "Plan B"—amending the Constitution through a constituent assembly to pave the way for a shift to a unicameral-parliamentary system.

In an interview over radio dzRH and later in a speech before the 1st National Summit of the Bagong Usbong ng Lingkod Bayan in Silang, Cavite, Ms Arroyo said Malacañang was "bow[ing] to the rule of democracy and the rule of law."

But Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, a staunch defender of the President, said it would be futile for the administration's allies to seek a reconsideration of the high court's 8-7 vote junking the initiative petition.

GMA CONCEDES/ A23



HOW TO GET DEBTS PAID
Sari-sari store owner Bartolome Malacura at Island Garden City of Samal in Davao del Norte, posted the names of his debtors on the façade of his store like streamers at a protest rally. Biggest debt owed him was P302.50. Some debts are two years old. The shame campaign paid off. From P2,000, the collectibles were down to P900 at press time. *(Story on Page A12.)*

DENNIS JAY SANTOS / INQUIRER MINDANAO

The inside story: Secret, swing votes

By Armand N. Nocum and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CHIEF JUSTICE ARTEMIO PANGANIBAN and Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, who delivered on Wednesday the crucial "swing votes" in the Charter change issue, managed to keep their views secret—and their votes surprised their colleagues.

"Although [Panganiban's] was the swing vote, Santiago's vote helped turn the tide toward those who voted to dismiss" the petition of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines and Sigaw ng Bayan, said a senior justice who spoke yesterday on condition of anonymity.

"Up to the last minute, Justice Santiago was unsure of her vote," the source said in a phone interview, describing the 10-11:30 a.m. special session called to decide on the petition for a people's initiative to effect a change in the form of government.

The source said he and his colleagues had expected Santiago to vote with the seven others who had voted to remand the petition to the Commission on Elections for a re-verification of the 6.3 million signatures the petitioners claimed to have gathered.

According to the source, this expectation was based on the fact that Santiago is known to be close to Senior Justice Reynato Puno, the *ponente* of the

THE INSIDE/ A23

Court allows nurses to take oath starting today

By Alcuin Papa and Leila B. Salaverria

THOUSANDS OF EXAMINEES WHO passed the June nursing licensure exam that was marred by a leakage can now take their oath as professional nurses, the Court of Appeals said yesterday.

Associate Justice Vicente Veloso said there was no legal impediment to the oath-taking, but the lawyer of the University of Santo Tomas nursing faculty, which is pushing for a retake of the exam, said they might go to the Supreme Court to finally settle the leakage issue.

"Those who can take the oath are now embodied in our ruling," Veloso said. "We have no intention to stop the exercise of the rights of those who passed."

The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) has provided the appellate court with the names of those who will take the oath.

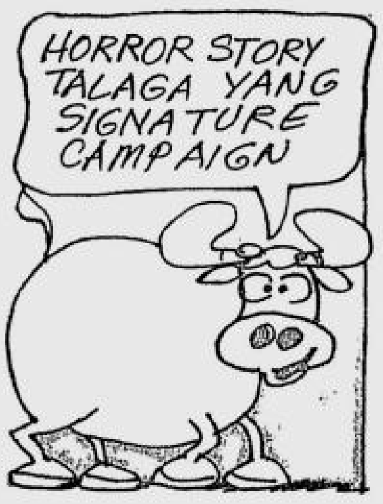
"We are happy but not very, very happy because of the 1,687 who were being required to retake the tests," PRC Chair Leonor Rosero said when asked about the appellate court's decision.

Rosero said the oath-taking, which will begin today at all PRC offices nationwide, would allow the passers to practice their chosen profession. "Now they can move on and join the nursing profession. That is what we want for them," she said.

Of the 42,006 who took the board exams on June 11 and 12 at 11 test centers across the country, some 17, 000 passed.

The appellate court came up with the

COURT ALLOWS/ A10


HORROR STORY TALAGA YANG SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN

Petitioners used Charter provision sloppily, deceptively

By Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

(Last of two parts)

ANALYSIS

EVERYONE KNOWS BY NOW THAT THE Supreme Court dismissed by a narrow vote of 8-7 the petition of Sigaw ng Bayan (Sigaw) and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) to validate their drive for initiative and referendum.

The narrow margin, however, does not tell all because the case dealt with more than just one issue.

All was not lost for the petitioners. Significantly, a majority of the justices held that RA 6735 is a sufficient enabling law for amendment of the Constitution through initiative and referendum.

I myself have held in my earlier columns that the Supreme Court should have upheld the sufficiency of RA 6735 in the 1997 Santiago v. Comelec case. Now, if I read the decision correctly, the Supreme Court is saying, "Yes, Virginia, we already have an enabling law for initiative and referendum."

The Comelec, therefore, can proceed to formulate implementing rules and regulations. Once this is done, those who wish to propose amendments through initiative and referendum can more safely avoid the pitfalls into which Sigaw/Ulap fell.

The fault of the petitioners was that they used the constitutional provision on initiative and referendum as well as RA 6735 not only incorrectly but also sloppily. I would even say in a deceptive manner. I will say more about this in another column.

There is an attempt to veil over this

PETITIONERS/ A23

Dead mayor, absent mayors signatories

By Carla Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THIS MAYOR may be turning over in his grave.

A list of municipal chief executives who supposedly signed on Tuesday a resolution affirming support for the holding of a plebiscite on the switch to a unicameral-parliamentary system of government included Mayor Francisco Bilbao of Hinoba-an town in Negros Occidental.

The problem was that Bilbao had died on July 4 at the Riverside Medical Center here, according to records obtained from the hospital.

Bilbao, 72, died of respiratory

DEAD MAYOR/ A8

Inquirer bags 5 of 7 business journalism awards

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER bagged five out of seven Ejap-Globe Telecom Business Journalism Awards on Wednesday night in Makati City. Ejap stands for Economic Journalists Association of the Philippines.

Doris Dumlao was awarded the best reporter for banking and finance, Elizabeth Sanchez for capital markets, Abigail Ho for energy, and Clarissa Batino for telecommunications.

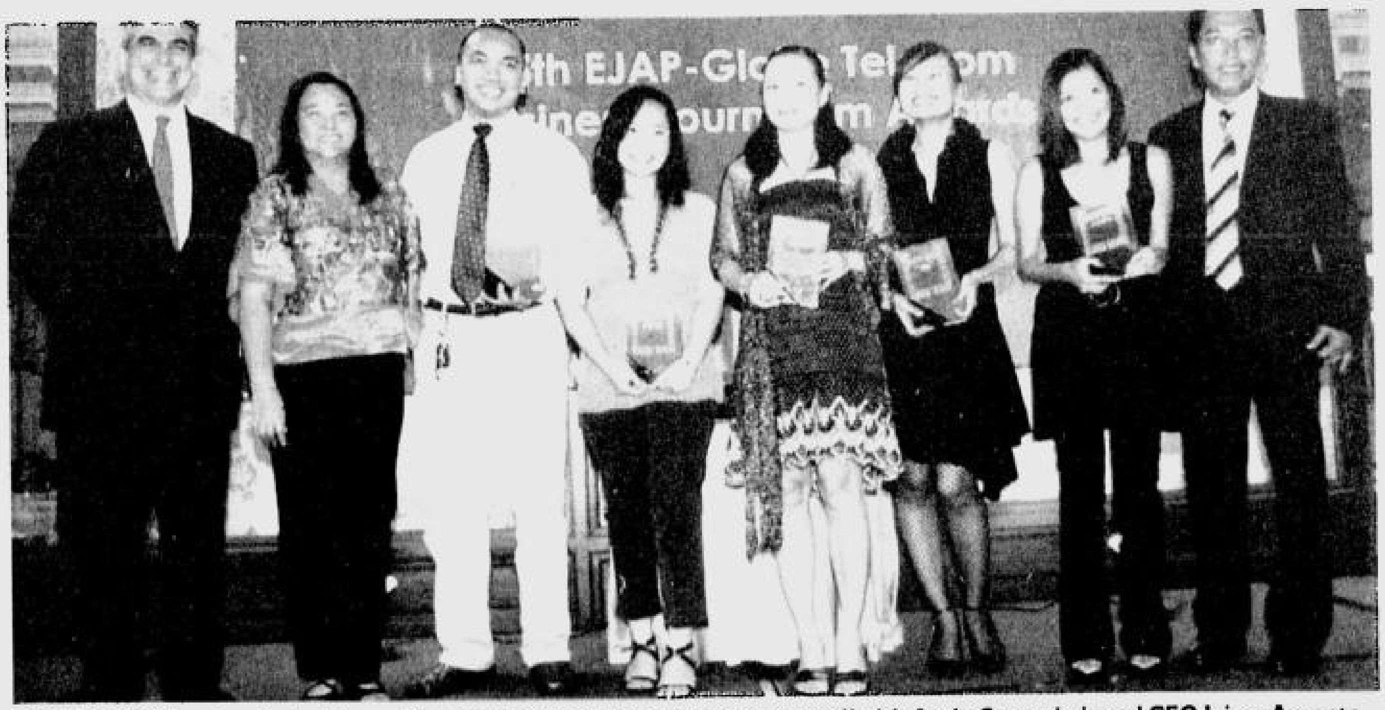
They were given due recognition for outstanding coverage in their respective beat assignments for 2005.

Daxim Lucas won the best feature award for his three-part series titled "Go family faces uphill battle in EPCIB brawl."

The multi-awarded INQUIRER business staff has dominated the Ejap-Globe Telecom Awards for the second straight year.

All five reporters had won other Ejap awards for either outstanding beat reporting or feature writing. It was the seventh Ejap award garnered by Batino (who recently joined Bloomberg), sixth by Dumlao, fourth by Ho, third by Lucas

INQUIRER BAGS/ A8



GRAND SLAM, not quite but close: The award-winning INQUIRER Business staff with Ayala Corp. chair and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala (extreme left). From right, Business section chief Raul Marcelo with his winning beat reporters: Clarissa Batino (telecommunications), Abigail Ho (energy), Doris Dumlao (banking and finance), Elizabeth Sanchez (capital markets), Dax Lucas (best in feature) and assistant business editor Corrie Narisma.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/MIKE ALQUINTO/NPPA IMAGES

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Second FrontPage
Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Eastern Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over the Eastern Luzon. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/10/26/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Court-martial for Lim, Querubin

HAUNTED KINGDOM

Zombies, ghouls and other monsters prowl the sprawling grounds of the Enchanted Kingdom for the popular theme park's Halloween party, which started yesterday. The "Ticket-to-Ride Mosnters on the Loose" party lasts until Nov. 2, All Souls Day. BOY CABRIDO

By Dona Pazzibugan

ARMY AND MARINE officers implicated in the failed coup last February are to be tried by a court-martial, based on the recommendation of a military investigating panel.

"The pre-trial investigation panel concluded that there exists probable cause and recommended trial by general court-martial," said military spokesperson Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro.

The three-man panel from the Judge Advocate General's Office, led by Jago deputy chief Col. Al Perreras, submitted a 200-page report, with 100 pages of attachments, to Armed Forces Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. earlier this week..

Esperon has turned over the report to his Staff Judge Advocate for review, with instructions that he complete the task "without delay."

Twenty-five officers from the Army's elite Scout Rangers led by ex-commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and 13 Marines led by ex-commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda and Col. Ariel Querubin were arrested and investigated for "attempting to start or create a mutiny."

The officers are also facing charges for conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman (Article of War 96) and conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline (AW 97).

According to Bacarro, it was "very, very possible" that some of the 38 officers may be dropped from the case, or that the charges may be changed.

"The Chief of Staff [Esperon] is committed to a speedy disposition of this case. At the same time he will ensure that there is no compromise on fairness," said Bacarro.

Esperon, who was Army chief at the time of the Feb. 24 failed coup, earlier said he would immediately convene a court-martial against the alleged coup plotters should military prosecutors recommend it.

Videotape

He said Lim's videotaped declaration of withdrawal of support against President Macapagal-Arroyo was "incontrovertible evidence" against him.

The panel missed several deadlines given by Esperon for it to submit its report since September.

LIM

QUERUBIN

There are unconfirmed reports that an initial report by the panel submitted was unacceptable to Esperon because it supposedly recommended that some officers be slapped with less serious charges and others cleared.

On Wednesday, the day the panel's report was submitted, Esperon ordered the transfer of six of the 13 Marine officers detained at a naval staff house in Fort Bonifacio to the Sangley Point naval base in Cavite City.

He said "some elements" were planning to spring Querubin, Col. Orlando de Leon and Januario Caringal, and Lt. Col. Custodio Parcon, Armando Banez and Achilles Segumalian.

But Navy Flag Officer in Command Mateo Mayuga, who agreed to transfer the six to the Fort San Felipe naval detention facility in Cavite City, later changed his mind.

The six officers were instead transferred on Wednesday night to the Marines detention center just a few meters away from the Bonifacio Naval Station staff house where they were being detained.

Navy spokesperson Cmdr. Giovanni Bacordo could not explain why Mayuga apparently went back on his agreement with Esperon.

Mayuga is Esperon's senior. He graduated from the Philippine Military Academy in 1973, a year ahead of Esperon.

In contrast to the apparent ambiguity in the treatment of the detained Marine officers, Lim and 24 Scout Ranger officers and 125 soldiers linked to the Feb. 24 coup plot are being held in a maximum security facility in the Army's Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, on Esperon's orders.

2 Air Force pilots on trial for AWOL

By Nikko Dizon

TWO PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE (PAF) PILOTS, one of them a son of a retired Air Force general, faced the general court-martial yesterday morning for AWOL (absence without official leave).

Capt. Carlo Castellano, son of former PAF Major Gen. Cicero Castellano who used to head the 250th presidential airlift command wing, entered a guilty plea before the Judge Advocate General's Office (JAGO).

On the other hand, Capt. Robert Solis, pleaded not guilty to the charge.

Another veteran PAF combat pilot, Capt. Hilario Pine, who is also facing an AWOL charge, surrendered to the Air Force yesterday.

The three worked for Philippine Airlines (PAL) as commercial pilots.

Sources told the INQUIRER that Castellano appeared before the JAGO accompanied by his parents while Pine was seen at the PAF's Laurel Hall, where the arraignment was held.

PAF spokesman Maj. Augusto dela Pena said Pine has not been scheduled for arraignment.

De la Pena also said he could not "categorically say" if Castellano has been charged with moonlighting.

PAF has determined last January that Solis and Pine underwent academic and flight simulation training with PAL, according to documents obtained by the INQUIRER.

"The military justice system is very exacting," De la Pena said, adding that even if Castellano is the son of a former Air Force general, he would not be given special treatment by the PAF.

De la Pena said that even before news broke out that the PAF has arrested Solis last Monday, the PAF's efforts to go after its moonlighting pilots has been "continuous" albeit without fanfare.

De la Pena said that only the President, as the military's commander-in-chief, could give clearance to the resigning pilots to have them formally dropped from the rolls and considered resigned from the command.

It is only then, he said, that PAF pilots could seek employment outside the military service.

But a PAL official said that last year, the airline reached an "arrangement" with Air Force Commanding General, Lt. Gen. Jose Reyes, that states resigning PAF pilots would only need clearance from the latter for them to be hired by PAL.

"We had the arrangement with CG (Reyes) a year ago to preclude all these problems. Under the arrangement, PAL will not accept Air Force pilots unless they have a clearance from him," Rolly Estabillo, PAL vice president for corporate affairs, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

The three pilots are now under the custody of the 520th Air Base Wing at Villamor Air Base but only Solis is detained at the same compound as the 12 PAF junior officers belonging to the Magdalo group of rebel soldiers.

Castellano and Pine were graduates of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class '95 while Solis was a member of the PAF Flying School Class '97.

Solis and Pine were combat pilots assigned to the 207th Tactical Helicopter Wing, while Castellano was assigned to the PAF Air Education and Training wing.

Early setback for rebel officer's bid for Senate

NAVY LT. ANTONIO TRILLANES IV, WHO IS ON trial on coup d'etat charges for his part in the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny, suffered an early setback in his bid to run for the Senate next year.

Makati Judge Oscar Pimentel has dismissed Trillanes' petition to be allowed leave from detention to register as a voter in Caloocan, a requirement for anyone wishing to run for public office.

Pimentel cited the fact that Trillanes was also being tried before a military tribunal on charges of "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" under the Articles of War.

He said that if Trillanes is able to obtain the consent from the military tribunal trying him, then the civilian court would pose no objection to his registering as a voter.

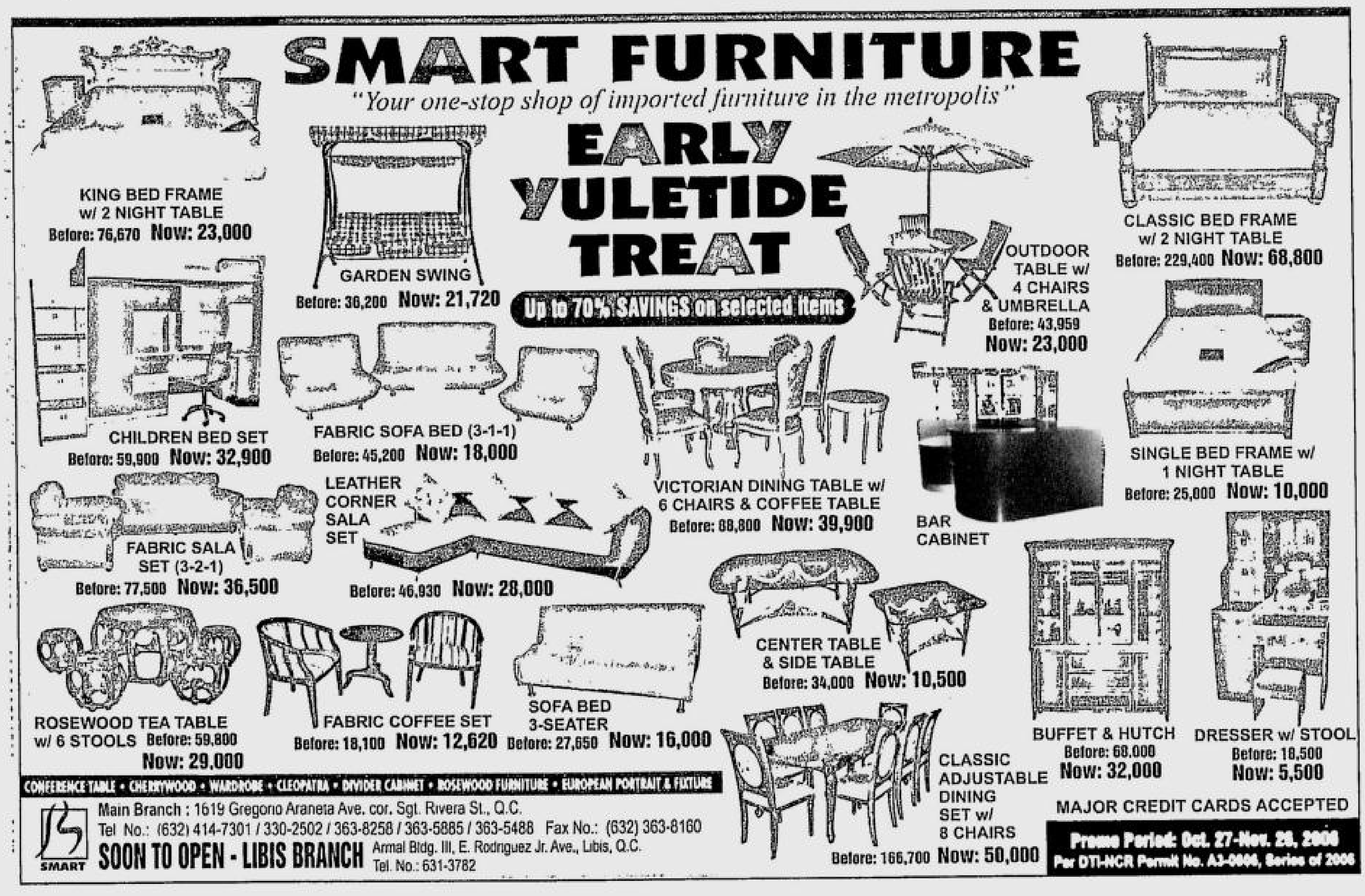
The prosecution opposed Trillanes' request, saying it was part of the jailed officer's "propaganda" preparation for the 2007 elections.

"He is facing a capital offense and has been denied bail. Even if he has not been convicted yet, the prosecution just tried to balance state security," said state prosecutor Juan Navera.

Reynaldo Robles, Trillanes' lawyer, was unfazed by the ruling, saying his client would seek other legal remedies.

Robles earlier announced that Trillanes would seek a seat in the Senate where he intended to campaign for reforms in the military.

Trillanes and a group of junior officers calling themselves the Magdalo group took over the Oakwood Premier hotel and the Makati financial district for almost 24 hours on July 27, 2003, denouncing supposed corruption in the military and demanding that President Macapagal-Arroyo step down. *Tarra V. Quismundo*



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'Economics, not politics'

INSISTING THAT ECONOMICS AND NOT politics was at the top of her mind, President Macapagal-Arroyo said she would not get around to naming her senatorial candidates until a few days before the deadline for the filing of certificates of candidacy for next year's elections.

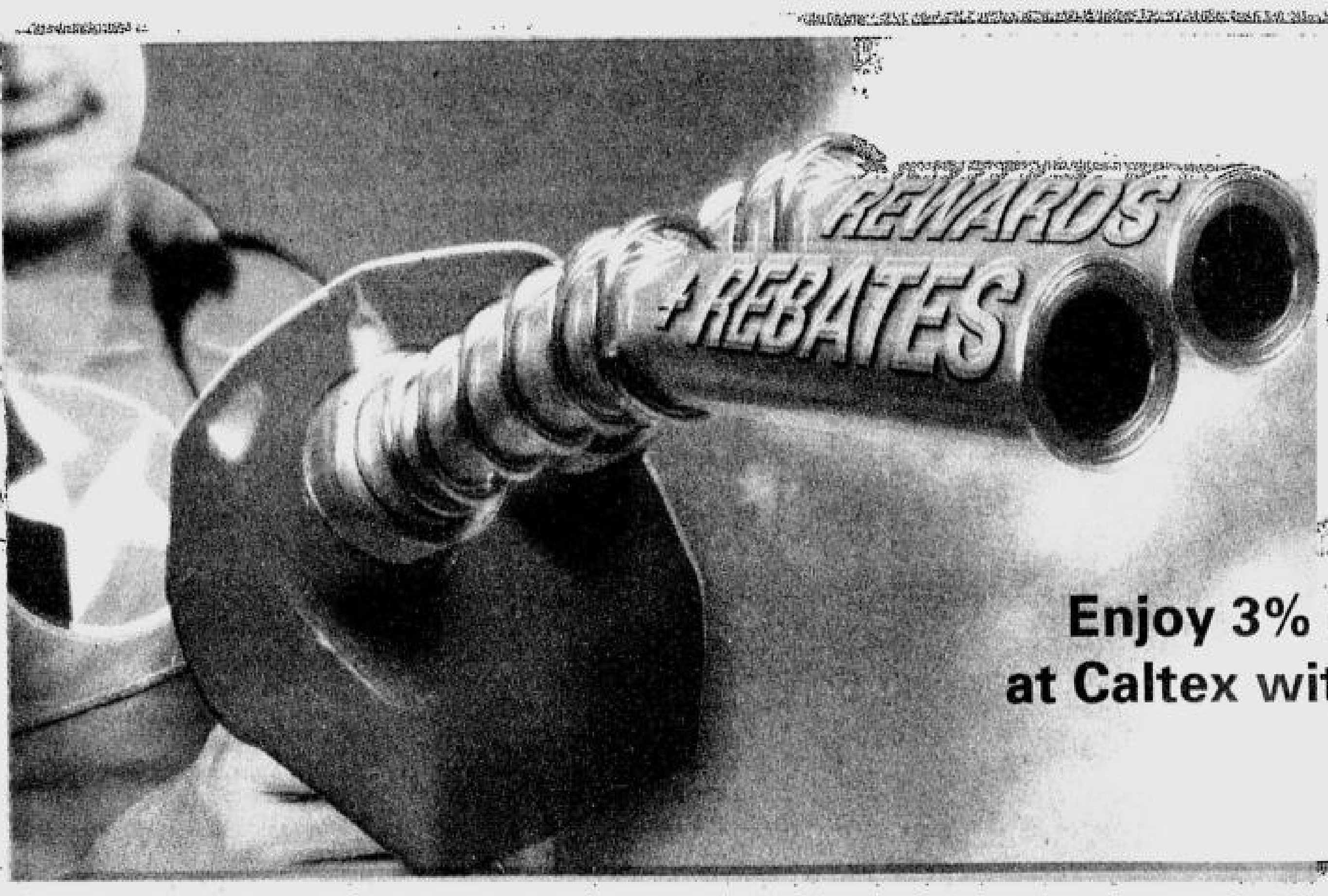
"That"s true, I am focused on the economy," said President Arroyo in a radio interview with dzRH station manager Joe Taruc yesterday.

"We will deal with politics when it is time to campaign. But in peacetime, we should first take care of our economy," said the President, a day after the Supreme Court junked the administration-backed petition for the calling of a plebiscite for Charter change.

"In 2004, I chose my candidates in December and it was only because they needed to file their certificates of candidacy," she added.

The 2007 polls could offer the Palace a new chance to take the majority of the Senate seats. The upper chamber, stronghold of her most vocal critics, has been the main roadblock in the administration's push for Charter change. Early SWS surveys, however, indicate Malacañang faces an uphill battle in the coming polls; opposition stalwarts have the lead.

In an interview with reporters, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, hinted that Malacañang would wait and see who among their allies was most prepared for the coming electoral battle. *Gil Cabacungan Jr.*



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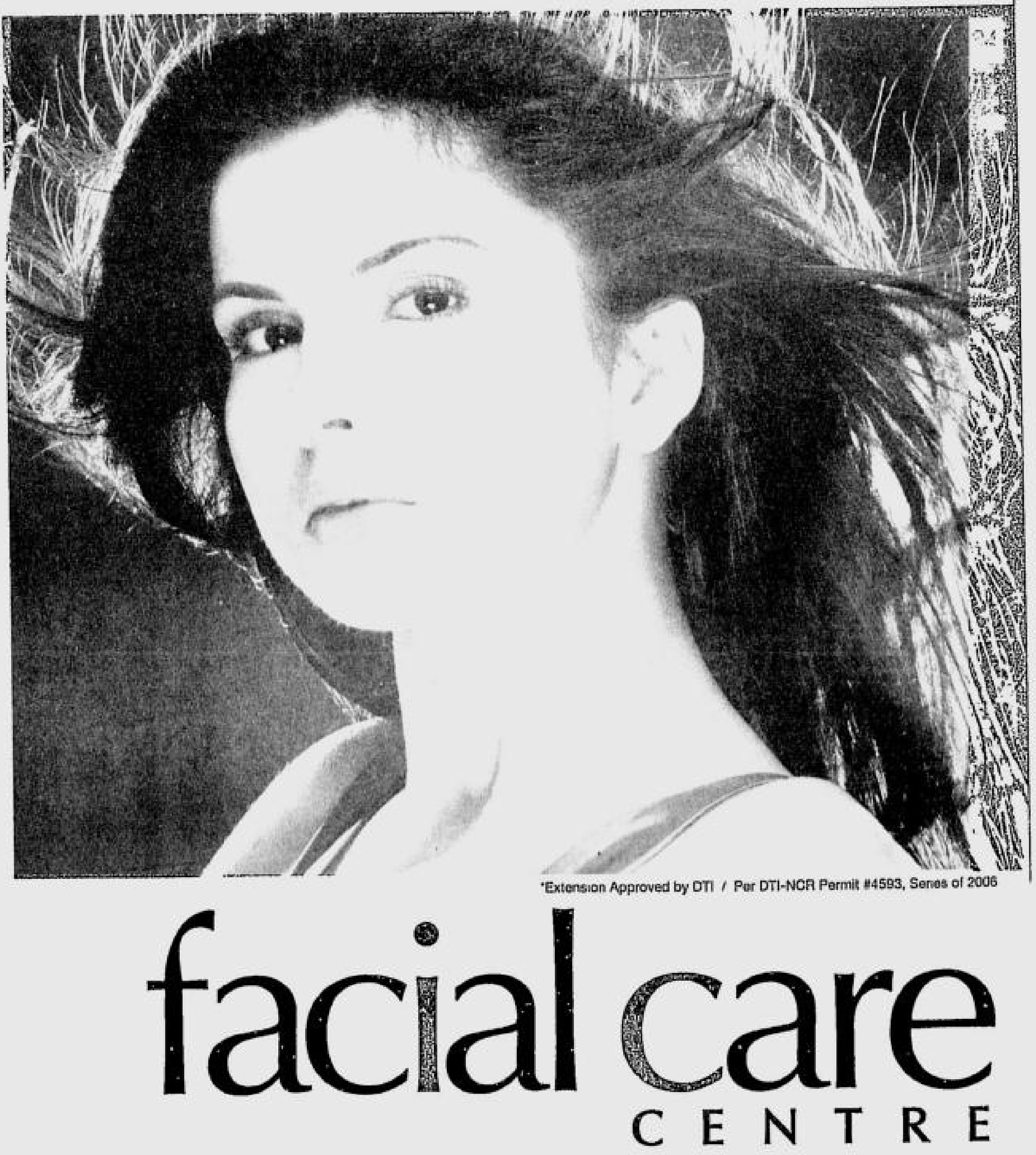

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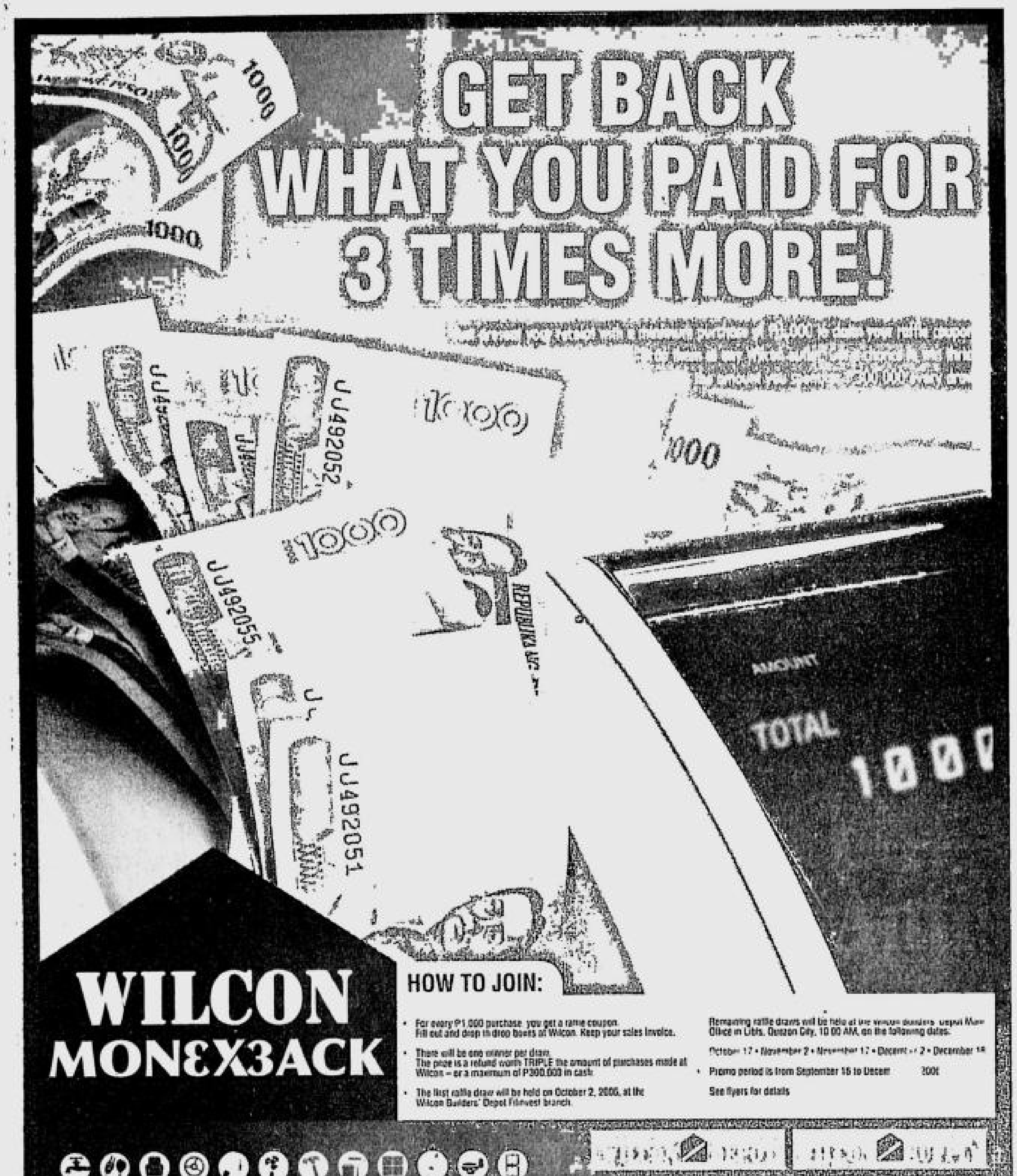

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- Promo period is from September 16 to December [illegible] 2006

See flyers for details

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Antismuggling probers eye luxury vehicle showrooms

THE TASK FORCE ON ANTI-SMUGGLING (TFAS) has begun inspecting luxury vehicles in auto showrooms to ensure that these are properly covered by importation documents.

The TFAS has so far inspected 10 car exchanges and showrooms in Quezon City, prompted by a complaint from the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturing Industry of the Phil. about the alleged presence of smuggled high-end vehicles in such establishments.

TFAS Executive Director Alexander Arcilla said the task force was still verifying the importation documents of the inspected vehicles, numbering 50 and including sports cars and sports utility vehicles.

The luxury-vehicle inspections will extend to other Metro Manila cities and other regions where such vehicles are sold.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales, who heads TFAS, said the owners of the inspected vehicles have been informed that they have to get a clearance from the TFAS and the Bureau of Customs before transferring ownership of the cars.

The TFAS has also sent a list of the inspected vehicles to the police's Traffic Management Group and to the Land Transportation Office for monitoring and to ensure that the clearance requirement is implemented.

"What I want to happen is that no certificate of payment would be issued by the customs bureau for an importation of a luxury vehicle unless this has passed through the VRIS [valuation reference information system]," said Morales in a phone interview.

He said this would ensure that the value of the imported vehicles was properly determined and the right amount of duties collected.

The VRIS is used by the Bureau of Customs to determine whether the declared value of an imported shipment was within standards and was not too low.

He advised buyers of luxury cars to scrutinize the covering documents and to look for the certificate of payment and clearances issued by the BOC to ensure that they are not buying smuggled vehicles.

"After all, ownership of smuggled vehicles is prohibited by law," he said.

The customs commissioner only took over supervision of the TFAS from the interior secretary in March 2005.

The other task force members are the Armed Forces chief, the Philippine National Police chief, the National Bureau of Investigation director, the chief state prosecutor of the National Prosecution Service, the Philippine Coast Guard commandant, the Philippine Ports Authority general manager, the director general of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, and the chief of the PNP's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group. *Leila Salaverria*

BIR asks local execs to help catch tax-dodging landowners

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE IS APpealing to governors, mayors and barangay officials to help the government unmask landowners who are not fully paying their income taxes.

BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag sought the help of local governments in response to an appeal from Negros Oriental Rep. Herminio Teves who asked the BIR to monitor more closely the agriculture businesses of landowners.

Buñag ordered BIR's regional directors and revenue district officers to coordinate with local government units in collecting income taxes, including those that are due from landowners.

According to Teves, landowners in the provinces are among the wealthiest individuals in our country, and their income from agricultural activities should be properly monitored to ensure that they pay the correct taxes. The BIR should concentrate on this sector and secure the cooperation of the local governments in unmasking those who do not pay their dues.

The congressman said that while agricultural products are not subject to the value-added tax, landowners and agricultural corporations are subject to income tax.

Teves, who is the father of Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, added that while landowners dutifully pay their local business taxes, "they usually cheat on their income taxes."

Meanwhile, the BIR will no longer extend again today's deadline (Oct 27) for taxpayers to avail of the "No Audit Program" or NAP.

Taxpayers whose taxable year ends on Dec. 31, 2005 and fiscal year in January, February, March, or April 2006 may avail of the program until today only. The program had already been extended to Oct. 27, 2006 from its original date of Oct. 1, 2006, because of the disruption of business activity by Typhoon "Milenyo."

The program, which exempts qualified taxpayers from audit for the period for which they qualify, seeks to encourage taxpayers to voluntarily declare and pay higher taxes, thereby reducing administrative costs from investigations conducted by the BIR.

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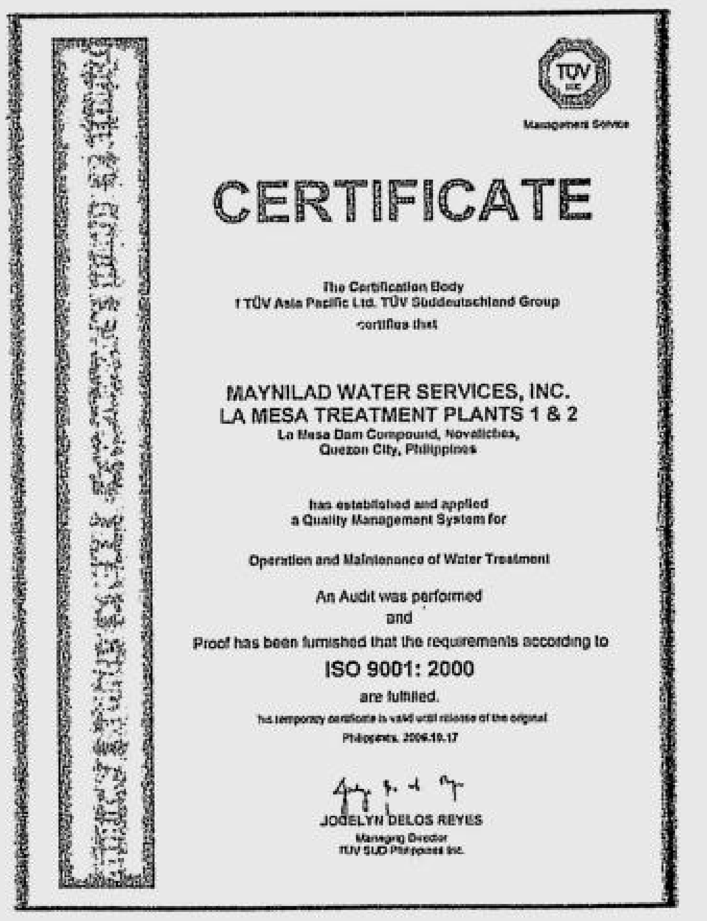

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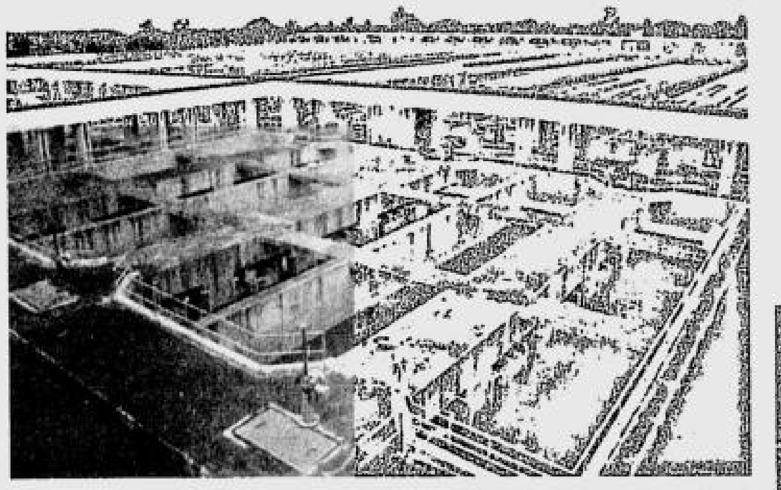

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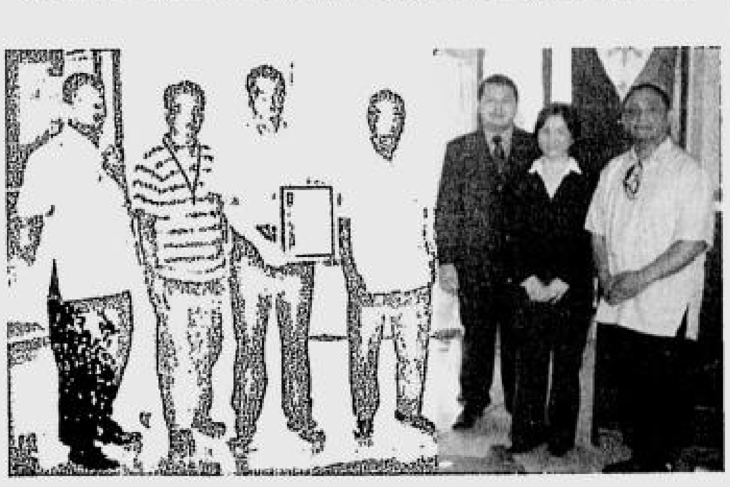

La Mesa Treatment Plant manager Diosdado Samia holds the ISO certificate awarded by TUV SUD representatives Reyland Nepomuceno (third from right) and Pinky Villacrusis (second from right) to Maynilad president Fiorello Estuar (center). Also in photo are (from left) Maynilad Operations VP Irinco Gonzales, Engr. Rogelio del Rosario Jr., and Quality and Environmental Management SAVP Francisco Arellano.(Right photo)

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Comelec bids out automation testing

By Jerome Aning

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS has given interested information and communication technology firms until Nov. 3 to submit proposals for the pilot testing of automation technology in the 2007 elections.

Resurreccion Borra, the commissioner in charge for modernization, said the proposals would be for technologies that may be applied to automate voting, counting, transmission of results, canvassing and recount.

He said the responses would allow the Comelec to assess the general availability of suitable solutions and to determine the current state of the market.

Proposals should be sent to Borra's office or to Peter Banzon of the Department of Science and Technology.

Banzon, chief researcher of the DOST's science department, heads the working committee that will select the appropriate technology for the automation exercise.

The committee is composed of top Comelec officials, members of Comelec's advisory council and technical consultants from both public and private sectors.

Borra, whose office acts as the committee's secretariat, said the body was interested in proposals that can cover automation "end-to-end," meaning from voting all that way to recount.

But he clarified this did not mean that the committee would not accept proposals covering only a single aspect of the automation exercise.

Also, there will be no formal formal evaluation or short-listing of the proposals and companies.

"The time frame for the implementation of the project is currently being finalized and it is expected that the public bidding and awarding of contracts will be completed in time to allow completion of all preparations for the pilot implementation," Borra said.

Meanwhile, the Movement for Responsible Enterprise (MORE) called on business firms to set aside their rivalries in "selling" their technologies to Comelec.

Albino Capidos, MORE spokesperson, said the P1.3-billion automation contract that the Comelec awarded to the MegaPacific consortium in 2004, which the Supreme Court subsequently voided, stemmed from a rivalry between bidders.

"A group will benefit from a rebid even as the possibility of scaring other bidders is always there, such that a conspiracy of bidders can manipulate the bidding," Capidos said.

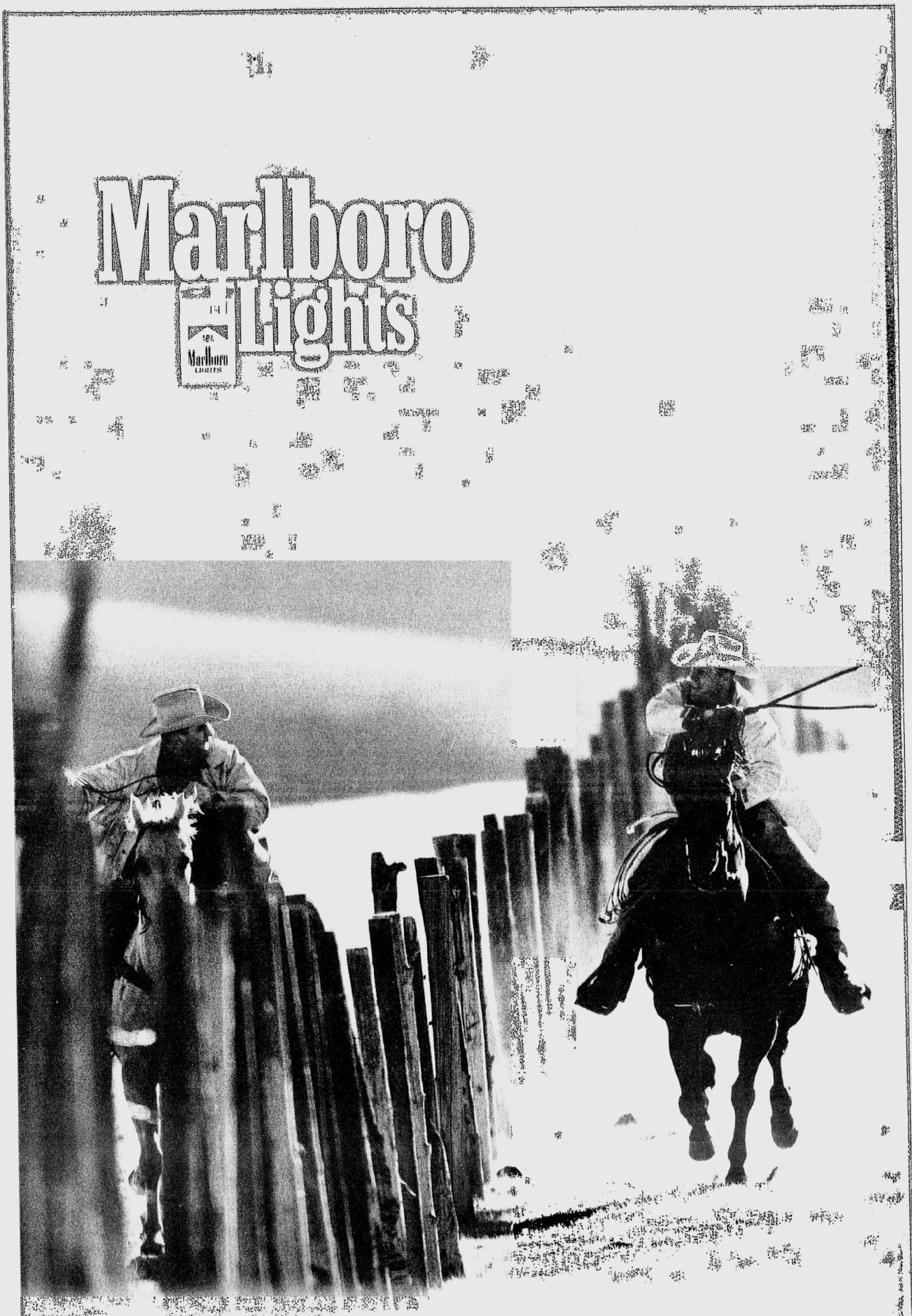
'7-11 stores for the masses'

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

CALLING THEM "7-11 STORES for the masses," President Macapagal-Arroyo plans to establish before Christmas more "Tindahan Natin (Our Store)" outlets which would make available to the poor goods at subsidized prices.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said the government would put up 220 new Tindahan ng Bayan stores in the next two months to add to the network's 333 branches at present and add more commodities in their shelves in time for the Christmas season.

In an interview aired on private dzRH radio station, President Arroyo announced: "So that the poor will enjoy the benefits of our economic growth, we will expand the so-called Tindahan ng Bayan. If the middle class have their 7-11 stores, the poor has a special store that currently sell rice, noodles and sardines (at subsidized prices)."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UST Law homecoming set Nov. 25

THE UST LAW ALUMNI FOUNDATION INC. will hold its annual reunion at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Inter-Continental in Makati on Nov. 25 at 6:30 p.m. on the occasion of the 272nd foundation anniversary of the UST Faculty of Civil Law. The theme is "Morality, Law and the Tomasian Lawyer."

To commemorate the affair, members of golden jubilarians class 1956 will be honored by the foundation.

For further inquiries, contact Justice Teodoro P. Regino at 912-5709 or 0915-7835455 or call 631-2852 or 631-2801 (Carol).

Local execs asked to account for P10M used in Cha-cha bid

By Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora

FLUSHED WITH THEIR SEEMING victory against Charter change proponents at the Supreme Court, the opposition in the House of Representatives is poised to seek an accounting of the P10 million used by local officials in the gathering of signatures for the people's initiative petition.

Representatives Alan Peter Cayetano and Roilo Golez demanded that Malacañang make a detailed expense report to the public and said they would ask Congress to conduct an official inquiry when it returns from a three-week recess in November.

"We want our tax money back," said Cayetano, pointing out that the Palace earlier admitted to spending some P10 million for the people's initiative.

He said those who had falsified signatures and certifications should be "punished and prosecuted."

Golez said the high court ruling dismissing the petition for a people's initiative to amend the Constitution showed that the Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities had "attempted to hoodwink and deceive the people with a fake petition."

"Sigaw should explain in full where they got all the big bucks they used to buy all those advertisements," said Golez, suggesting that some Sigaw leaders had "close relationships" with Malacañang officials.

Anakpawis Representative Crispin Beltran said Sigaw should drop its plans to file a motion for reconsideration. He said the 6.3 million signatures were impossible to verify, and that the methodology used to gather the signatures remained questionable.

"It would have been an impossible task for the Commission on Elections to verify and clear all the signatures," he said.

Deposed President Estrada said he intended to file criminal charges against Ulap and Sigaw officials for allegedly conspiring to spend government funds in support of their people's initiative petition.

Estrada said he was filing the complaint as "part of my duty both as an intervenor in the Supreme Court case and as a taxpayer."

Rufus Rodriguez, Estrada's lawyer, said Ulap president Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado and other Ulap officers who are also government officials may be liable for the violation of Republic Act 3019, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Private parties like Lambino who allegedly conspire with public officials would be similarly liable, he said.

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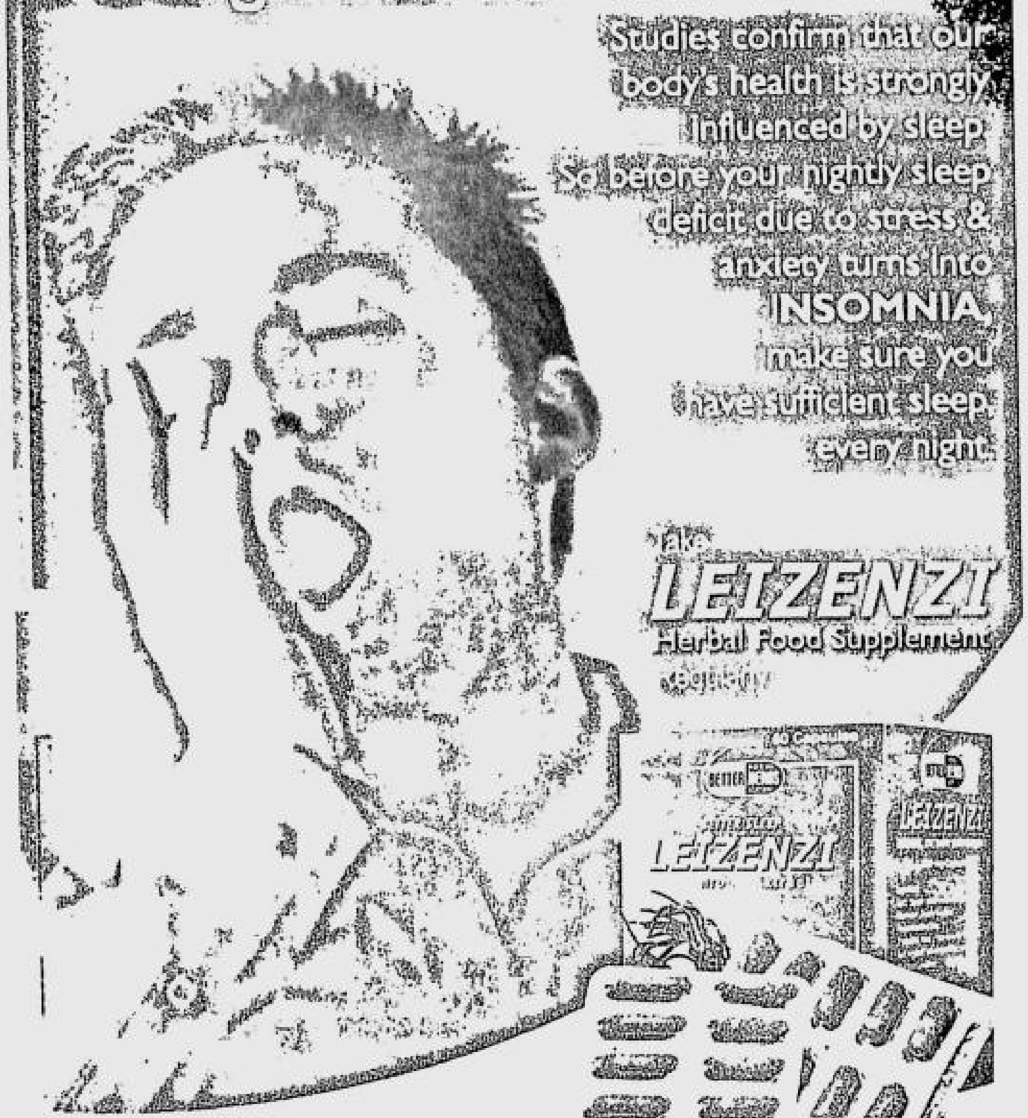

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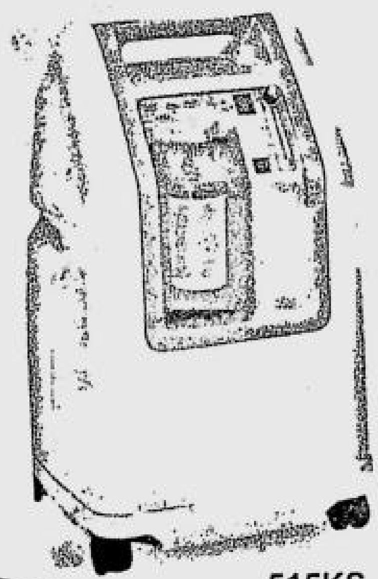

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GMA off today on 5-day trade blitz in China

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO LEAVES for a five-day trip to China today with the hope of forging more business with the region's largest and fastest growing economy.

The five-day trip to China will take the President to Xiamen, Jin Jiang, Nanchang, Guilin and Nanning, where she will co-chair with China the holding of the commemmorative summit of the 15th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China partnership on Oct. 30-31.

With the President is an official 26-member delegation, which includes members of her cabinet as well as lead Charter change proponents Gov. Ben Evardone of Eastern Samar, Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentao and Sen. Lito Lapid. Also on the list are family members and House Representatives Juan Miguel Arroyo and Ignacio Arroyo.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said President Arroyo will hold bilateral talks with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, and meet with business groups, government officials and students.

On her first day today in Xiamen, the President is also expected to end her day by visiting SM (Shoemart) Xiamen, a branch of the local retail chain and one of the first and biggest Filipino investments in China.

In Nanning, the President will attend the 3rd China Exposition where the Philippines is a participant.

The President will end her tour with a visit to Hong Kong on Nov. 1 to meet with the Filipino community, and for some rest.

'Golden Age'

In a radio interview yesterday, the President said the China trip would hopefully further a "golden age" in relations between the two countries. The Philippines enjoys a trade surplus with the emerging Asian power; Chinese tourists in the country grew three fold in 2005 compared to the previous year.

"Trade and other relations with China are huge," she added. The President cited Chinese investments in railway systems, mining and manufacturing, adding that the Philippines could rapidly expand the export of copper, electronics and tropical fruits to China.

"We have our own niche, even if more investments are going to China," Arroyo said.

"They buy more from us than we buy from them. They are really a huge market." Imports to the Philippines from China in the first seven months of 2006 totaled US$2.103 billion, while exports to China in the same period hit US$2.352 billion, the National Statistics Office said.

In 2005, total imports from China amounted to US$2.973 billion, while exports to China hit US$4.077 billion.

Arroyo expressed confidence that a China-financed project to rehabilitate the railway system running north Manila would be completed by 2009.

"We are also looking at the large tourism market from China that grew three times last year over the year before," Arroyo said.

Tourism Department figures showed that Chinese tourist arrivals in the Philippines hit 64,584 in the first half of 2006, a 41 percent increase from the same period last year.

Also stressing the security facet of her trip, the President added that "the world will be a safer place if China is a good brother and good neighbor to the region." *With AFP reports*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, October 27, 2006
29th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	**Eph 4:1-6**
Gospel:	**Luke 12:54-59**

Jesus said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once: 'A shower is coming.' And so it happens. And when the wind blows from the south, you say: 'It will be hot'; and so it is. You superficial people! You understand the signs of the earth and the sky, but you don't understand the present times.

And why do you not judge for yourselves what is fit? When you go with your accuser before the court, try to settle the case on the way, lest he drag you before the judge and the judge deliver you to the jailer, and the jailer throw you in prison. I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the very last penny."

Commentary

Paul pleads for his community to live up to their baptisms, to live in service, selflessly and with no violence, with patience, preserving the Peace of Christ that binds them together. This is the Body of Christ, one Spirit before God the Father—we dwell in God! This is the bedrock of our lives/faith. And are we, like so many Jesus speaks harshly to, more concerned with watching the weather and not judging what is right? We are told to settle with one another, forgive and not cause scandal and be imprisoned for what we do that is not of God. There will be justice for all, including we who have been baptized into the Peace of Christ.

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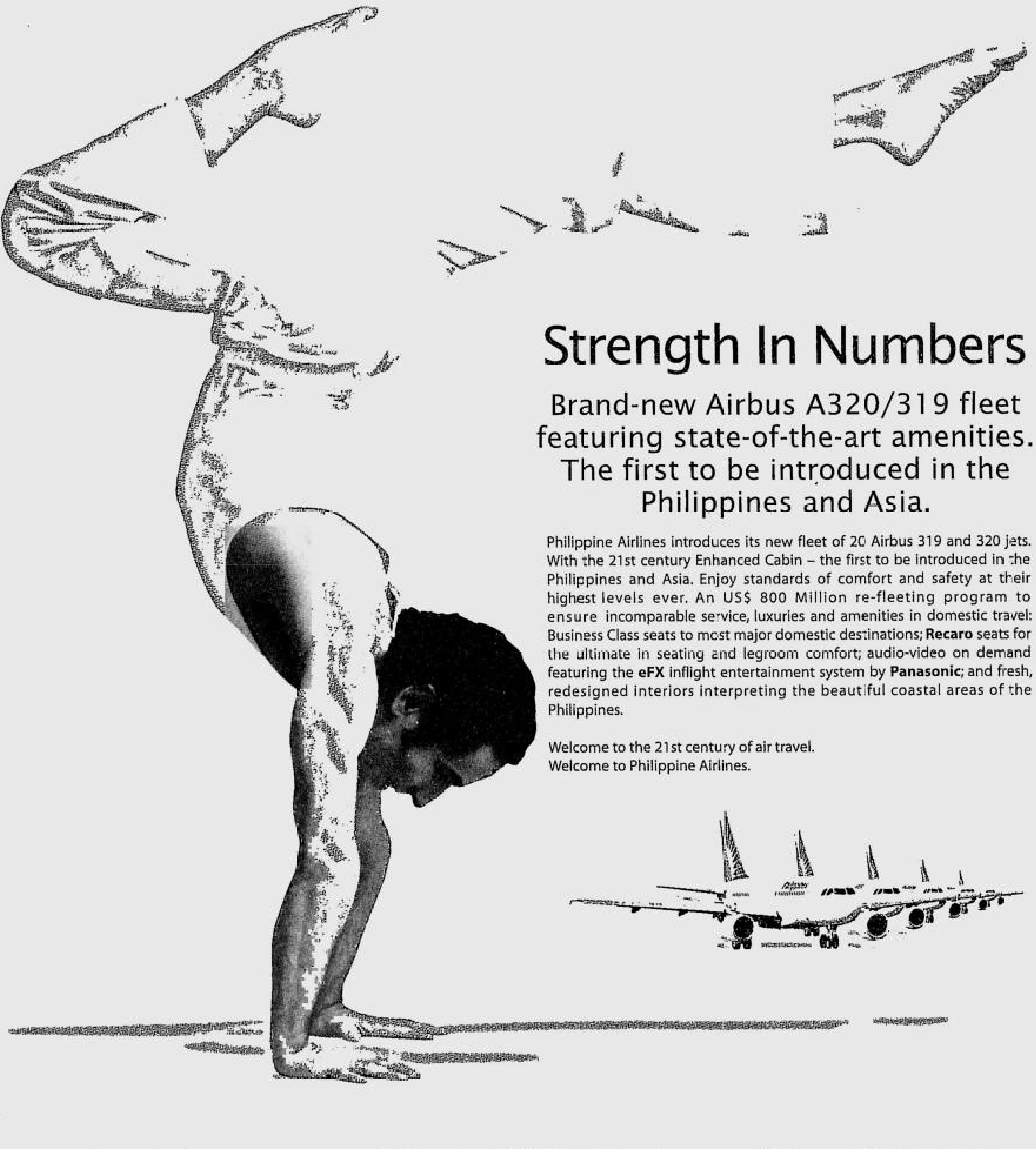

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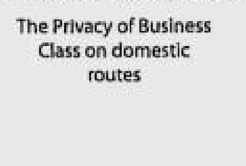

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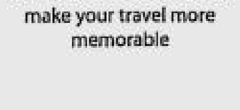

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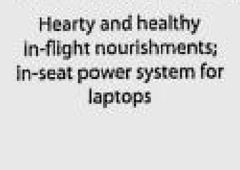

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A BOY AND A CROSS at the Jaro cemetery in Iloilo City where, like anywhere else in the country these days is preparing to honor their dead on Nov. 1 and 2. ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Dead mayor, absent mayors …

From page A1

failure due to lung cancer and also suffered from liver cirrhosis, his attending physician, Dr. John Ledesma, said.

Ad spread

Most of the town mayors from Negros Occidental listed as signatories to the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) Resolution No. GA 001-2006 supporting Charter change through a people's initiative were also absent when the document was passed during the league's 16th national convention held at the Manila Hotel on Oct. 24.

The resolution was published in national newspapers on Wednesday as a two-page advertisement titled "Mayors: Let the voice of the people prevail." It listed the names of more than 1,000 mayors from all over the country who purportedly supported the LMP move.

A town mayor here, who asked not to be identified, pointed to the irregularities to show that the resolution did not reflect the sentiments of all the local chief executives.

The resolution said the mayors unequivocally supported a plebiscite on the proposed parliamentary shift proposed by the 6.3 million "verified" petitioners for a people's initiative.

But people who caused the publication of the advertisement simply lifted the list of members of the LMP and published all their names, the source said.

He said the ad could have been published to show to the Supreme Court, which was then deliberating on the issue, that there was a force behind the move, the source added.

Clerical error?

Don Salvador Benedicto Mayor Cynthia de la Cruz, a past president of the LMP Negros chapter and member of the LMP national executive committee, said the inclusion of Bilbao's name in the resolution could just have been a "clerical error."

She pointed out that the new mayor of Hinoba-an, Mary Jane Cubid, was present at the convention and it should have been her name that should have been placed.

De la Cruz said that with 1,502 municipal mayors under the LMP roster, the change in the name of the Hinoba-an mayor might have been overlooked.

She recalled that during the LMP meeting, Mayor Corazk0.2

on Abad of Sarrat, Ilocos Sur, moved that the resolution be passed and she seconded it. Since no one present objected to the motion, it was passed unanimously, she said.

As the convention went on, De la Cruz said some of the mayors might have gone out for other business, and this could explain why those absent were still listed as having approved the resolution.

But the source said the list also included the names of mayors who were not in the convention.

Cha-cha foes listed

Two mayors from Negros Occidental—Ricardo Presbitero of Valladolid and Alfonso Gamboa of EB Magalona—who were known to be against the people's initiative petition were also on the list, the source added.

Mayors Manuel Escalante of Manapla and Esteban Coscolluela of Murcia town both admitted in separate interviews that most of the mayors of the province were not at the convention when the resolution was passed.

Coscolluela said that when the mayors arrived in Manila from the province on Tuesday, they had to check in at the Traders Hotel and reached the Manila Hotel late.

Jokes

"We did not even know that a resolution was passed," he said, adding that he only knew about it on Wednesday when he had heard jokes about the late Bilbao being among those who supported it, he said.

In fact, 17 out of 19 municipal mayors of Negros Occidental were not around when the resolution was passed, according to Escalante, who is the LMP president in Negros Occidental.

But the names of the 19 mayors, including that of Bilbao, appeared on the list.

Inquirer bags 5 of 7 business journalism …

From page A1

and second by Sanchez.

The trophies were handed out by Ayala Corp. chair and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, who delivered the keynote address, and Globe Telecom president Gerardo Ablaza at the Hotel Intercontinental ballroom.

The two other winners were Rocel Felix (Philippine Star), best reporter for agriculture and Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat (Manila Bulletin), best reporter for trade and industry.

The Ejap-Globe Telecom Journalism Awards, now in its 15th year, aims to encourage the development of business journalism in the country by giving due recognition to reporters who have produced accurate, timely and relevant economic stories.

UP, Ateneo graduates

Batino, Ho and Sanchez are all AB Journalism graduates from the University of the Philippines while Dumlao is a political science graduate also from UP Diliman. Lucas holds a BS Management degree from the Ateneo de Manila University.

For this year, Ejap has chosen the theme "Raising Philippine Business into the Global Arena."

In his keynote address, Zobel underscored the business journalists' role in making the Philippines more globally competitive.

"We really need more stories about how the global economy is constantly changing the economic rules for Filipino individuals, enterprises and communities," he said.

Globalization never sleeps

"I'm convinced that globalization never sleeps and it continuously creates and destroys, opens and closes doors, threatens and attracts, promotes and punishes Filipino economic endeavors," he said.

The business tycoon said he would like to read more stories about Filipinos and their competencies, expatriate Filipinos, micro-enterprises, rural economy, social issues shaping business advocacy and corporate social responsibility.

This year's board of judges was chaired by Synergeia Foundation president and former Finance Undersecretary Milwida Guevara. The members were Philippine Stock Exchange president Francis Ed. Lim; Trans-Asia Power Generation Corp. president Francisco Viray, a former energy secretary; UP School of Labor and Industrial Relations Prof. Rene Ofreneo, a former labor undersecretary; and ATR Kim Eng Securities head of research Edgar Bancod.

Jessie Cabaluna, SGV & Co. partner, and her staff tabulated the scores.

The criteria for judging were:

- Content (60 percent)—Adherence to truth and responsible journalism as manifested in the accuracy, fair and balanced presentation, depth of reporting and devoid of sensationalism;
- Style (30 percent)—Ability to communicate clearly and effectively as shown by the writing style, clarity, logical presentation of issues, coherence and fluidity of ideas; and,
- Peer vote (10 percent)—How colleagues rate each other in terms of beat performance.

Globe Telecoms has supported the journalism awards the past six years.

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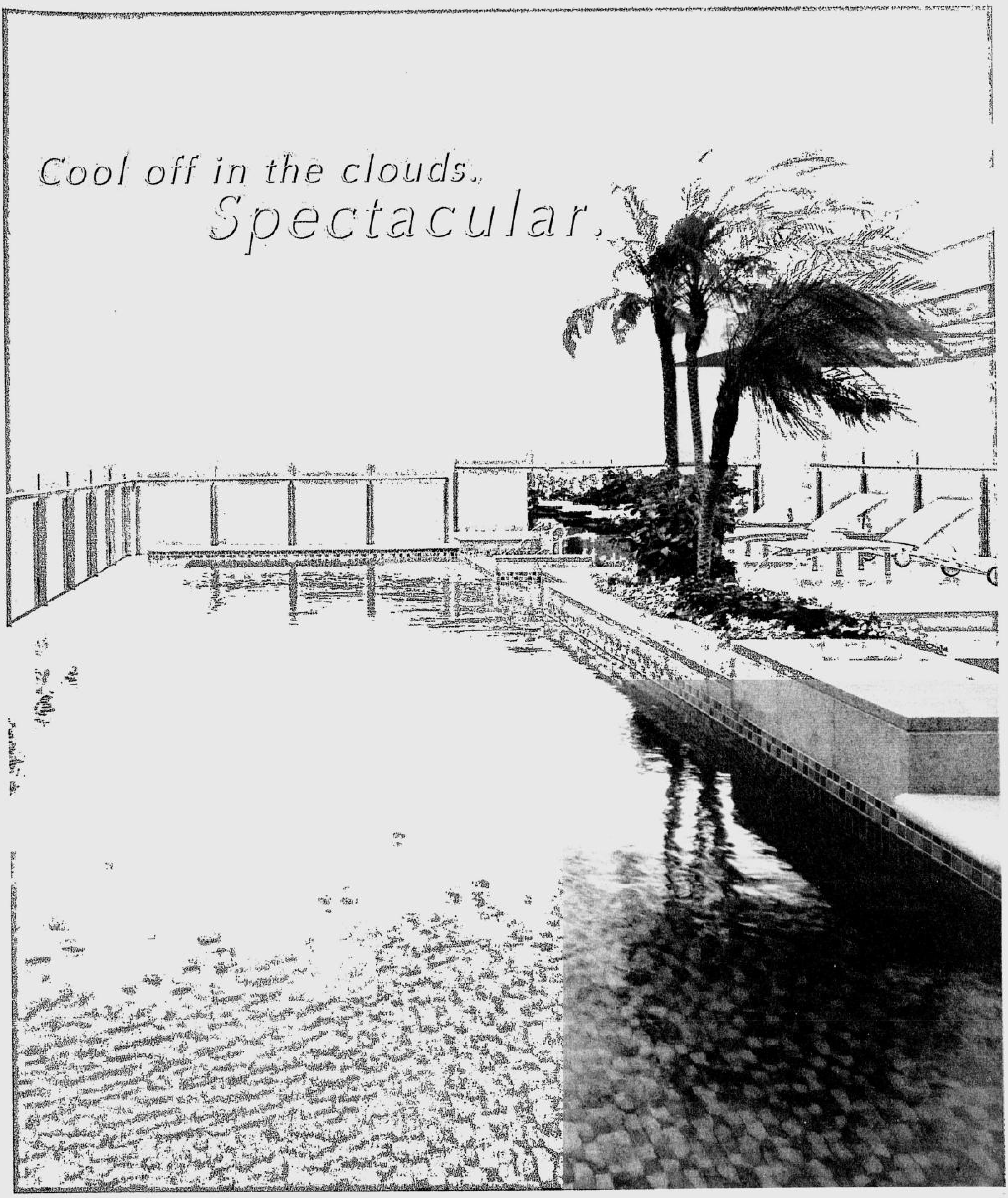

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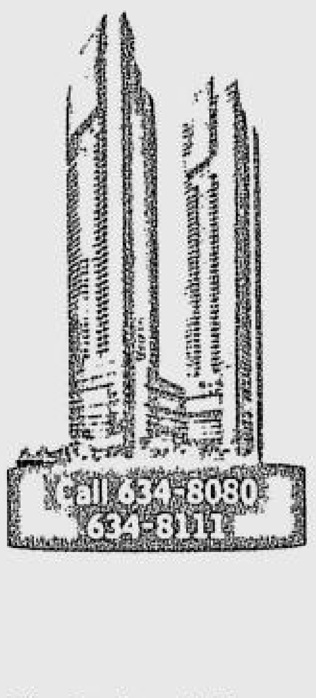

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China, Asean leaders to discuss pact to prevent conflict in Spratlys

CHINESE AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN leaders have agreed to discuss a proposed "code of conduct" to prevent conflicts in disputed South China Sea territories, a Filipino official said yesterday.

The leaders of China and the 10-strong Association of Southeast Asian Nations will discuss the proposed accord at a summit Monday in China's Guangxi region. President Macapagal-Arroyo will lead Asean as current head of the free-trade bloc, Filipino diplomat Benito Valeriano said.

China and Asean approved a landmark but watered-down 2002 accord aimed at avoiding armed conflicts over contested South China Sea areas after Chinese officials rejected proposals for a stronger "code of conduct" that could be perceived as a binding pact, he said.

Peaceful coexistence

But China finally acquiesced after being assured that the 2002 accord could be turned into a better but still nonbinding agreement, said Valeriano, deputy director general of the Philippine foreign affairs department's Asean office.

"The idea is to have the spirit of a peaceful coexistence in the South China Sea," Valeriano told a news conference.

China and Southeast Asian countries were reviewing and suggesting ways to come up with a better accord, which could be approved when Chinese and Asean leaders meet in December on the sidelines of the Asean summit, he said.

The disputed territories include the Spratly Islands, claimed in whole or in part by four Asean members—Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Vietnam—plus China and Taiwan. Also contested are Scarborough Shoal, claimed by the Philippines and China, and the Paracel Islands, disputed by China and Vietnam.

Largely uninhabited, the areas are believed to be rich in oil and natural gas. They straddle busy sea lanes and are rich fishing grounds.

Asean is made up of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam. *AP*

AT LONG LAST, nursing exam passers are going to take their oath today, and hopefully move on with their lives. PDI PHOTO

Court allows nurses to take oath …

From page A1

decision after more than five hours of conciliation talks with parties concerned.

In attendance were representatives of the PRC, the Board of Nursing (BON), Office of the Solicitor General, and some of the petitioners who have asked the Court of Appeals to reconsider its decision of Oct. 13.

The Court of Appeals ruled then that those who passed the board exam conducted outside Manila and Baguio and those who registered at but did not attend the "final coaching" sessions at three review centers suspected of leaking questions could take their oath as nurses.

The court ordered a retake of Tests III (medical-surgical nursing) and V (psychiatric nursing) for 1,687 examinees who were added to the list of passers after the PRC recomputed the test scores.

It also ordered the reinstatement to the list of passers of the 1,186 graduates whose names were removed following the recomputation.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, who has been tasked by President Macapagal-Arroyo with resolving the controversy, stopped the PRC on Oct. 16 from administering the oath.

Brion said he wanted to avoid further complicating the situation of examinees in light of the possible filing of a motion for reconsideration. Several groups have since filed a motion for reconsideration asking the court to stop the oath-taking.

Brion, who was supposed to hold conciliation talks with concerned parties so as to discourage them from delaying the retake of the exams by filing a motion for reconsideration, was not at the meeting yesterday.

He is on official trip to Japan, where he is attending a maritime industry conference.

Pia Bersamin, lawyer of the UST nursing faculty, said the meeting between the stakeholders and the Court of Appeals did not resolve anything.

"The meeting did not address the issues that we raised," a frustrated Bersamin told the INQUIRER, referring to the cheating.

"Nothing was resolved with finality. We disagree with the decision to move ahead with the oath-taking because we want the issues to be resolved first," she said.

Bersamin said the selective retake by some 1,600 nursing graduates of the board exam did not address the issue of the leakage.

She said board passers should not blame the petitioners for "stalling" the oath-taking.

"It was not us who ordered the TRO on the oath-taking and it was not us who made the mistakes in the handling of the issue. They should blame the PRC for that. Our point is to uphold the integrity of the nursing profession. We keep focusing on individual rights but we keep forgetting the common good," she said.

No basis for retake

Renato Valdecantos, PRC commissioner, said the appellate court's decision yesterday "sustains our position on the matter that there is no basis to require a retake."

"This (oath-taking) is one way of putting closure to this unfortunate incident. The other side can go all the way to the Supreme Court. But in the meantime there is no more restraining order and we can go ahead with the oath-taking," Valdecantos said.

He said the PRC, after due proceedings, could revoke the licenses of those found to have "knowingly benefited from the leakage."

Valdecantos said it was up to the executive branch, through the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), to determine those culpable of the leakage.

Selective retake in December

For his part, Renato Aquino of the Alliance of New Nurses, which is opposed to a retake, said he was "very happy" with the appellate court's decision on the oath-taking.

"All along the PRC has been right. There should have been an oath-taking as far back as Oct. 13. Now we can move on," Aquino said.

Rosero said the 1,687 graduates ordered to undergo the selective retake of the nursing exam would take the test in December, at the same time as the next regular nursing licensure exam.

The PRC earlier said a retake of the nursing board exam was unnecessary after it implemented measures to counter the effects of the leakage. It invalidated 20 leaked questions in Test III and reduced the weight of Test V because 90 of its 100 questions were leaked.

But the appellate court, in response to a petition filed by professors and officials of nursing colleges and examinees who questioned the PRC action, invalidated the recomputation. *With a report from Jerome Aning*

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Moving Display Supports, Doppler Radar Tower
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PAGASA Central Office

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PAGASA, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites registered PhilGEPS suppliers manufacturers/ distributors/ contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project Proposed 2 sets Moving Display Supports, 4-meter Doppler Radar Tower and Doppler Radar Control Room

Qty./ Unit	Brief Description	Approved Budget For the contract	Price Validity	Contract Duration
Lot 1	Proposed two sets Moving Display Supports at Science Garden Complex & WFFC Compound	P 126,031.92	90 cal Days	20 cal. Days
Lot 2	Proposed 4-meter Doppler Radar Steel Tower at Mt. Sta. Rita SBMA, Zambales	P 651,589.22	90 cal. Days	90 cal. Days
Lot 3	Proposed Doppler Control Room at Mt. Sta. Rita SBMA, Zambales	P 223,792.80	90 cal. Days	30 cal. Days

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule/ Time	Venue
1. Issuance of Bid Requirements & Bidding Documents	October 27 – November 6, 2006	General Services Section 3/F PAGASA Central Office Bldg.
2. Opening Eligibility Requirements	November 7, 2006 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Amihan Conference Room 2/F PAGASA Central Office Bldg.
3. Pre bid Conference	November 7, 2006 / 2:00 p.m.	
4. Opening of Bids - Envelope I Envelope II	November 17, 2006 / 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. November 17, 2006 / 2:00 p.m.	
5. Bid Evaluation & Post-qualification	November 17 – 23, 2006	
6. Notice of Award	November 29, 2006	

Interested parties may avail Bid Requirements and Bidding Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee equivalent to 0.2% of the approved budget per item in no case lower than P500.00 and not more than P1,000.00 to the PAGASA Cashier, upon presentation of this advertisement clipping, together with the Company's TIN.

The PAGASA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) PRISCO D. NILO
Chairman, PAGASA-BAC

(PDI - Oct. 27, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Regional Office No. VIII
Pawing, Palo, Leyte
Tel. Nos (053) 323-3084 / 323-7590
Fax No. (053) 323-3061

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
PEST CONTROL CHEMICALS FOR NFA REGION VIII

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY, through its Corporate Budget for 2006 intends to apply the sum of FIVE HUNDRED FORTY SIX THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED FIFTY NINE PESOS AND SIXTY CENTAVOS (P546,859.60) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the procurement contract of Pest Control Chemicals for NFA Region VIII for the year 2006. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for 2006 Pest Control Chemicals of NFA Region VIII. Delivery of GOODS is required within Thirty (30) calendar days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed with the following information and specifications:

Active Ingredients (Duly registered w/ FPA & officially tested, validated & recommended by NFA-TRDD for use to control stored product pests)	QUANTITY	UNIT	ABC/UNIT	TOTAL AMOUNT OF ABC (Php)
Lot 1 (FOGGING)				
A. Pirimiphos Methyl	40	Liters	P 2,443.64	P 97,745.60
B. Permethrin w/ Piperonyl Butoxide & S-Biol	11	Liters	P 3,600.00	P 39,600.00
C. Cyfluthrin	1	Liter	P 3,600.00	P 3,600.00
Total for LOT 1				P 140,945.00
Lot 2 (RESIDUAL/PROT. SPRAYING)				
A. Deltamethrin	660	25g/sachet	P 235.00	P 155,100.00
B. Cyfluthrin	160	20g/sachet	P 300.00	P 48,000.00
C. Permethrin	720	25g/sachet	P 235.00	P 169,200.00
Total for LOT 2				P 372,300.00
Lot 3 (FUMIGATION)				
A. Aluminum Phosphide	12	Tin can or Flsk w/ 333 RT	P 2,025.00/ Flask@333RT	P 24,300.00
Total for LOT 3				P 24,300.00
Lot 4 (TERMITE CONTROL)				
A. Chlorpyrifos	2	Liters	P 717.00	P 1,434.00
Total for LOT 4				P 1,434.00
Lot 5 (RODENT CONTROL)				
A. Coumatetralyl	8	Kgs (Dust or Tracking powd.	P 985.00	P 7,880.00
Total for LOT 5				P 7,880.00
GRAND TOTAL:				P 546,859.60

The Bidders may bid for as many lots as he is interested.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act."

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the NFA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat, NFA Regional Office No. VIII, Pawing, Palo, Leyte.

A complete set of Bidding Documents can be obtained by interested Bidders upon payment of non-refundable Bidding fee of Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00) in cash.

The Bidding Schedule is as follows:

	Date	Venue
Issuance of Bid Documents	Oct. 23-31, 2006 (8:00 am-5:00 pm)	NFA RO8 Pawing, Palo, Leyte
Pre-Bidding Conference	Nov. 8, 2006 (1:30 pm)	NFA Conf. Rm Pawing, Palo, Leyte
Submission & Opening of Bids	Nov. 20, 2006 (1:30 pm)	–do–

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered during the bid opening and must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an amount of at least equal to, and not lower than a percentage of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be bid in the following schedule and form or any combination thereof:

Cash or Cashier's Check or Manager's Check (Cashier's or Manager's Check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank issued in Tacloban City)	1% of ABC
Surety Bond issued by GSIS marked "Callable on Demand"	2.5% of ABC

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any formality/informality of the bids, received and to accept only such Bids which are advantageous to the National Food Authority.

The NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders, for any expense incurred in the preparation of bid documents.

(Sgd.) ANTONIO J. ADORABLE
Asst. Regional Manager/ Chairman-RBAC, NFA RO8

(PDI–Oct. 21 & 27, 2006)

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PAGCOR

October Draw Milyonaryo
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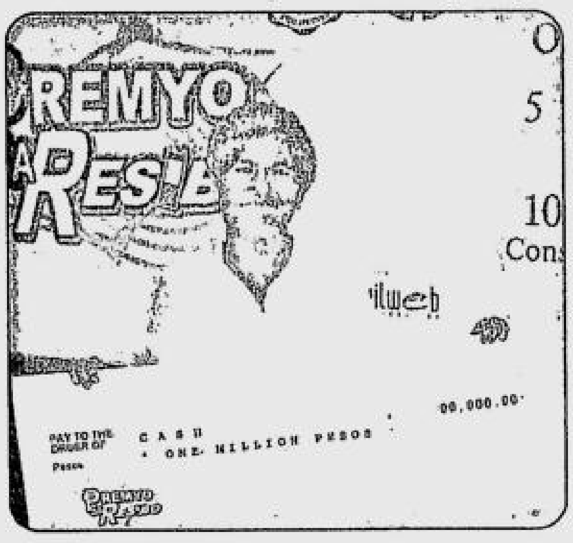

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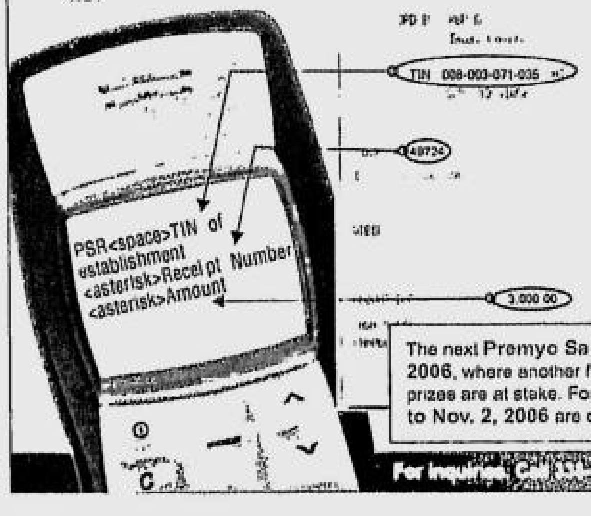
"Bago pa ako dumating sa sitwasyon na ito iniisip ko na talaga bumili ng farm. Kasi hindi naman tayo habang buhay na nagtratrabaho, may retirement age tayo. Gusto ko talaga mag invest sa agricultural para may pupuntahan ako pag retire ko."



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TRADING PLACES
Roles are reversed as President Macapagal-Arroyo becomes the photographer while officers of the Press Photographers of the Philippines pose for the shot at the Rizal Hall of Malacañang. The occasion was yesterday's oath-taking of the new set of officers of the PPP, umbrella organization of press photographers in the Philippines. LYN RILLON

Insurance chief blamed for TPL mess

A CONSUMER RIGHTS GROUP IS BLAMING Insurance Commission chief Evangeline Escobillo for the controversy over the issuance of compulsory third party liability (CTPL) policies for public utility vehicles (PUVs).

In a complaint filed with the Ombudsman, Rene P. Mades, representative of the Commuters and Consumers Advocate of the Philippines Inc. (CCAP), said Escobillo's move to endorse and approve the creation of a private company to handle the processing of all CTPL policies effectively created a monopoly.

"Escobillo openly endorsed and approved the creation of the Compulsory Insurance Processing Center Corp. (CIPCC) which will centralize the 'processing' of all CTPL policies. This set-up effectively creates a monopoly. Or at the very least, the creation of a single entity is a combination in restraint of trade," Mades said.

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Log-in na sa www.gonegosyo.org

Shame campaign works for retail store owner

ISLAND GARDEN CITY OF Samal—His neighbors owe him money from accumulated debts incurred from borrowing small stuff from his retail store. The debts were three months overdue and despite repeated demands, no payment was made.

So Bartolome Malacura, 70, did what he thought would force his neighbors to pay—shame them.

He wrote his neighbors' names on pieces of cardboard and posted these in front of his store. Alongside the names were the items his neighbors owed—liquor, sugar, candies, money.

One placard read: "*Hoy* (name of the debtor) *Bayari utang* (Pay your debt)."

"This is just a small enterprise and still they won't pay?" he lamented.

The biggest debt was from a certain Ube, who owed Malacura P302.50. Some debts are 2 years old.

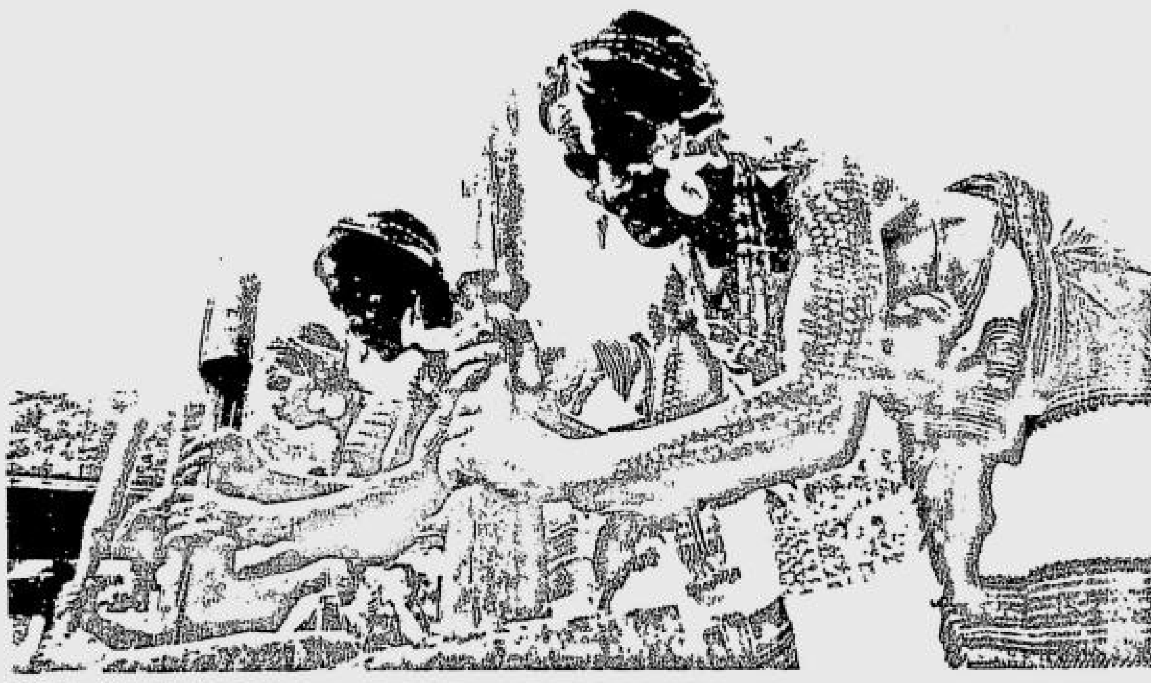
Malacura said the shame campaign worked. From P2,000, the total amount of unpaid debts went down to P900.

The names of those who paid were removed from the posters. And the ordeal taught Malacura a lesson in retailing: "I won't lend anymore. Let them be angry with me." *Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao*

PSE WELCOMES
HER EXCELLENCY
PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
TO THE
METROBANK PUBLIC OFFERING CEREMONY

PRESIDENT ARROYO does the honors at the Philippine Stock Exchange for the traditional ringing of the bell for the Metrobank IPO on Thursday at the trading floor, Tower 1, Ayala Avenue. From left, Lauro Baja Jr., Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Francis Sebastian, Metrobank president Arthur Ty, Metrobank chair George Ty, Ms Arroyo, PSE chair Jose Vitug, PSE president Francis Lim, Antonio Abacan, SEC Chair Fe Barin and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco. EDWIN BACA

SECURITY FORCE for the 12th Asean conference on Dec. 11-13 includes these Marines on their way to board Navy ships for Cebu City where the summit of the heads of state from 10 nations will be held together with their dialogue partners. AP



POUNDING on this fact: A Cordillera rice variety called "unoy" is pesticide free and in demand in the United States while Filipinos are consuming chemical-laced imported rice. Barangay Tulgao women elders in Kalinga demonstrate the traditional way of processing the organic rice to the accompaniment of thei chanting to ease tired limbs. EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN

ON BENDED KNEES: Insp. Ma. Ivy Castillo need not beg the President for her well-deserved medal as she has been named one of the 10 outstanding policewomen of the Philippines by the Zonta Club of Makati. Assisting Ms Arroyo is PNP Director General Oscar Calderon. LYN RILLON

Asean leaders . . .

From page A1

as a terrorist hot spot, officials said.

It is one of the key proposals for the Asean summit in Cebu.

"We will, hopefully, have a convention on counterterrorism to make Asean's battle against terrorism more cohesive," Ms Arroyo said on dzRH radio. "Southeast Asian countries should help each other in this fight."

The proposed Asean Convention on Counterterrorism calls on the free trade bloc's members to allow the extradition of terror suspects, greater information exchanges and cooperation in tracking and prosecuting terror suspects, a Philippine official said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

It also seeks compliance with UN antiterrorism pacts, the official said. A draft proposal was being circulated among Asean members ahead of the summit, he said.

Crucial front

Southeast Asia has been regarded as a crucial front in the US-led global war on terror due to the presence of homegrown groups allied with Osama bin Laden's extremist network.

It has served as a terrorist breeding ground and the target of major attacks, including the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings that killed 202 people and were blamed on the Indonesian-based group Jemaah Islamiyah.

Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines forged an antiterrorism coalition a year after the attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. They were later joined by Cambodia and Thailand.

But the rest of Asean—Brunei, Laos, Burma (Myanmar), Singapore and Vietnam—stayed out of the coalition, which vowed to intensify information exchanges and allow closer coordination among antiterrorism agencies.

A crackdown has led to the arrests and deaths of hundreds of terrorist suspects across Southeast Asia since 2001, but the region has remained under threat of attacks. *AP*

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Senate to probe 'toxic' RP-Japan trade deal

From page A1

Santiago, chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations, said that until all the parties had presented their side, she was keeping an "open mind" on the agreement which President Macapagal-Arroyo and then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi signed in Helsinki on Sept. 9.

"It will certainly come to my committee and I will hold public hearings when we resume our session. We have to clear all this up in committee hearings. Otherwise, we will have very lengthy debates during the [ratification]," Santiago told the INQUIRER.

She said Malacañang had not yet submitted the JPEPA to the Senate, the country's treaty-ratifying body.

The fears of the environmentalists apparently sprang from their interpretation of the list of products or trade subjected to zero tariff, Santiago said.

She stressed that the JPEPA followed the standard template of trade agreements that Japan had with members of the Overseas Economic Cooperation for Development, the organization of rich countries.

Also, she said the World Trade Organization rules on free trade agreements included "substantially all trade."

The Philippines and Japan are signatories to the 1992 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and are bound by its prohibition on the trade of toxic wastes, she said.

Santiago said she did not think either country would violate the convention.

Fears ill-founded

"So the fears are apparently ill-founded because they are drawing conclusions from past experience which did not include the two countries," the senator said, apparently referring to an incident in 1999 when a shipment of toxic wastes to the Philippines was sent back to Japan.

"But I am keeping an open mind on this issue," she added. "It's a good thing this was publicized because the government will be compelled to explain that it (JPEPA) does not implicitly allow importation of toxic wastes."

Santiago said she wanted the environmentalists to give her the legal provisions supporting their fears on the entry of toxic wastes as well as "empirical evidence" that Japan exported toxic wastes to countries with which it had similar trade pacts.

Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas II, chair of the Senate committee on trade and commerce, also said that the trade pact needed Senate ratification.

"The breadth and scope of the JPEPA requires that it should be ratified first, with the Senate's scrutiny and concurrence," Roxas said in a statement.

The ratification process will allow senators to determine if the JPEPA upholds or violates Philippine sovereignty and whether it is economically equitable to both parties, Roxas said.

Giving away too much?

While several free trade agreements in the past have been classified as executive agreements that did not require Senate ratification, JPEPA may be of a larger scope, said Roxas.

Like Santiago, Roxas wants to hold a hearing of the trade committee to bring to light the various aspects of the controversial agreement.

"We need to determine if we will be giving away too much, and if we are going ahead of the World Trade Organization in the trade concessions we will be giving Japan," he said.

"For example, what are we giving up in exchange for the entry of our nurses or tuna exports to Japan? We need to compute the aggregate amounts of these concessions, for we may be at the losing end in the long run," Roxas said.

Environmentalists said they would appeal to Japanese officials to stop their government from making the Philippines a dumpsite for toxic and hazardous wastes.

High sense of shame

"The Japanese have the highest sense of shame. We will convey to Japan through informal and formal means that this [dumping sanctioned by the JPEPA] is not improving Japanese-Filipino relations," Mother Earth founder Odette Alcantara told the INQUIRER.

She said it was obvious from the initial study of the basic agreement of the JPEPA, which was not made known to stakeholders until after the JPEPA was signed last month, that it was not a fair exchange.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has set a meeting with the critics of the JPEPA today in Malacañang.

Greenpeace appealed to the sense of dignity of Filipino leaders and urged the Senate to reject the JPEPA.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources initially rejected the inclusion of wastes in the JPEPA but later yielded to pressure from the Department of Trade and Industry, which said the treaty was an "all-trade deal."

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Non-negotiable

EDITORIAL

SIGAW NG BAYAN BELIEVES THE SUPREME COURT became a "trier of fact" when, in a very close decision, it declared that the Commission on Elections was right in rejecting the group's petition to conduct a plebiscite. But an attentive reading of the majority decision shows that the Court dealt with what was presented to them—and then decided on questions of law. The problem, as the majority decision repeatedly pointed out, was that even based on documents and oral arguments presented by the proponents of a plebiscite, the facts presented were self-defeating.

The Court was asked whether in dismissing the petition of Sigaw ng Bayan and friends to hold a plebiscite, the Comelec exercised "grave abuse of discretion." How was the legal question to be answered? The Supreme Court said, by starting with the Constitution's provisions and its language. And, when necessary, clarifying that language by referring to the intent of the framers as preserved for posterity in the journal of the Constitutional Commission. Then, by referring to the documents submitted to the Court, and the clarifications made before it in oral arguments. And also, when relevant, by consulting past decisions of Philippine and American courts.

The questions the Court dealt with can be expressed in terms familiar to anyone who followed the last two attempts to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo: "sufficiency in form and substance." (There is an irony here: the lawyers working for the President demanded in the House of Representatives scrupulous attention to both. Now that the Supreme Court has done it, how can they complain?)

The Court began by explaining how Sec. 2 Art. XVIII must be understood: by its own language and according to the intentions, stated for the record, of the Constitution's framers. They explicitly bore American practices in mind. American practice and judicial decisions require, for the sake of fairness and clarity, that when citizens petition for constitutional amendments, they must clearly sign on to an equally clearly specified amendment. (Filipinos from California know this principle from the practice of voting on propositions to amend state laws.) The Court said that, based on the actual documents presented by Sigaw ng Bayan, this was obviously not the case. Neither the signature sheets signed by citizens nor the petition submitted to the Comelec specified the amendments.

In the absence of such information, the Court cannot assume facts that aren't there, such as whether those who signed or those who petitioned in their name that anyone knew, and asserted, what exactly they proposed the public should decide on in turn. Furthermore, it was clear that Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines mobilized to secure support for two different things: Sigaw for its own menu of constitutional changes; Ulap for those proposed by the Presidential Consultative Commission on Charter Change. But the two are neither identical nor complimentary.

The Court then presented legal precedent distinguishing between a constitutional amendment and a revision: our Constitution permits amendments to be proposed by people's initiative, but not revisions. What was proposed was a revision because of the comprehensive change in constitutional orientation that a shift to the parliamentary system would entail.

Finally, the Court said that by fusing the parliament proposal with a change to a unicameral legislature and then a vague one for federalism, the proposals became fatally flawed. The Constitution requires proposed amendments to be specific, and not indivisible in the manner proposed. Thus, the Court focused on a term that will surely gain wide political currency: "logrolling." Introducing a proposal requiring an interim parliament to convene as a constituent assembly to propose even more amendments represented an objectionable attempt to sneak in a provision that was politically favorable to a new parliament, but irrelevant to the central proposal to establish a parliament in the first place.

And so the Court threw out the plebiscite petition.

In the end, the Court remembered the shameful irony of the Marcos years, when the dictator insisted to "let the people decide" on his dictatorial rule. From 1973 to 1986, he thought the people spoke through ballots pre-written by his agents. The present Court now insists that that shameful period should never be repeated. Justice and fair play require the Constitution to be replaced by a new one strictly according to its provisions.

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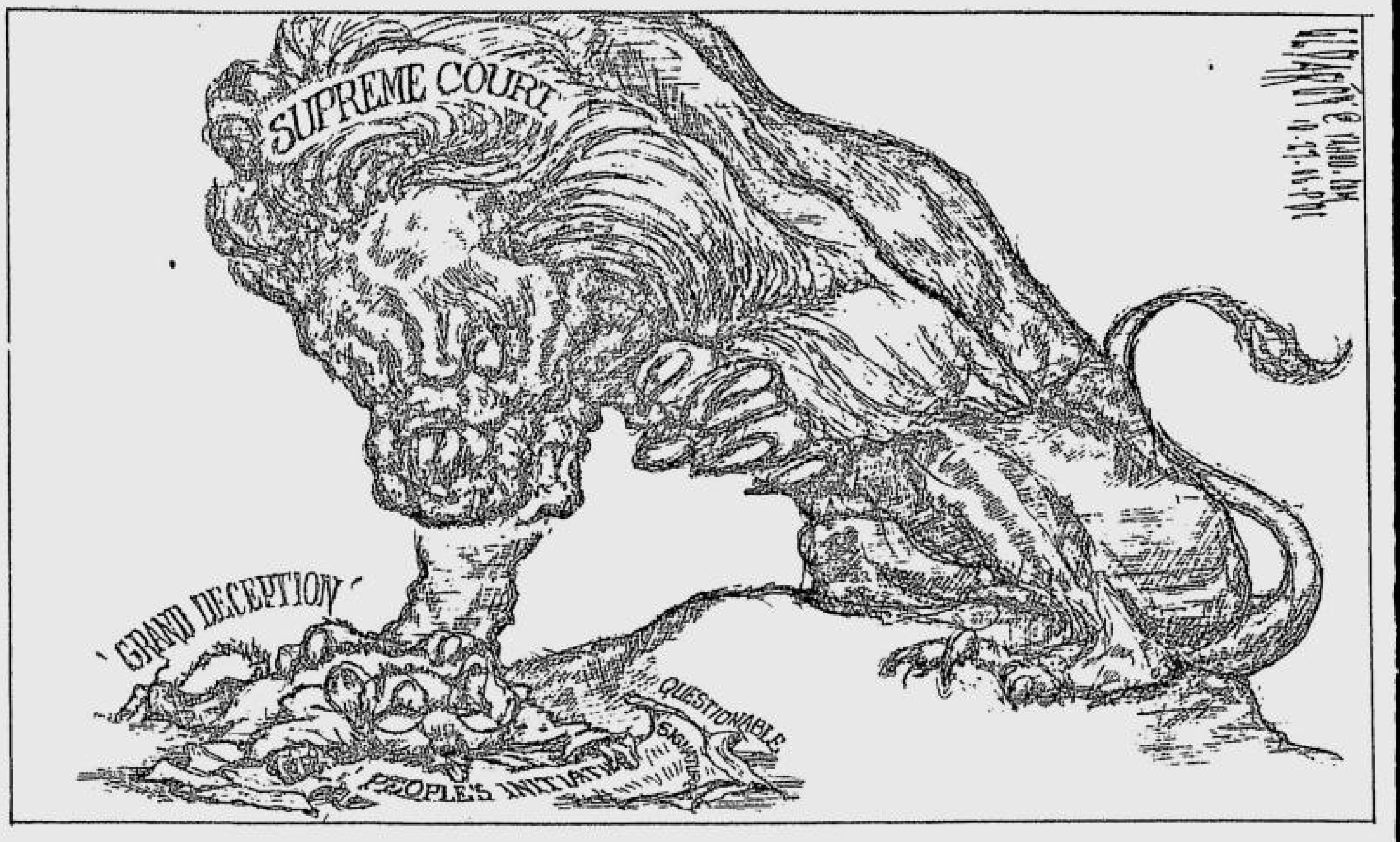


Not people's but politicians' initiative

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE WONDER OF IT ALL IS THAT SEVEN JUSTICES of the Supreme Court, only one less to make up the majority, voted to uphold the people's initiative pushed by Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap). I had hoped that the Court would strike it down unanimously because of the transparent abuse of a provision of the Constitution and the selfish motives of the proponents. But I was wrong.

"*May mga bobo rin palang* justices *ang Corte Suprema*," a friend commented after hearing of the close Supreme Court decision.

To be fair, the seven dissenting justices did not really vote to uphold the people's initiative. They merely wanted the Court to remand the case to the Commission on Elections and therefore wash their hands of the responsibility of deciding (and being blamed) for the repercussions of the very ticklish issue.

In the dissenting opinion penned by Justice Reynato Puno, they said that "the issue of whether the petition complied (with the requirements) involves contentious facts. Its resolution will require presentation of evidence and their calibration by the Comelec according to its rules."

Puno's other arguments on the other issues can be called, if this were a basketball game, "forcing through." As to the allegations that the signatories failed to understand what they signed or were misled into signing the signature sheets, Puno said that lower courts had ruled that a person is presumed to have knowledge of the contents of a document he had signed.

Only a person with a closed mind can believe this doctrine. One doesn't have to be a genius to believe that most of the signatories were made to sign blank pieces of paper and were not shown the amendments and revisions of the Constitution that they were endorsing.

The majority opinion penned by Justice Antonio Carpio demolishes the argument of Puno. In yesterday's INQUIRER, Fr. Joaquin Bernas, Ateneo law dean emeritus, summarizes Carpio's main point. It would be helpful to repeat it here:

"The Lambino group failed to satisfy the basic requisite of Section 2 of Article XVII. The essence of amendments directly proposed by the people's initiative upon a petition is that the entire proposal on its face is a petition by the people. This means two essential conditions must be met.

"First, the people must author and sign the entire proposal. No agent or representative can sign on their behalf. Second, as an initiative upon a petition, the proposal must be embodied in a petition.

"This was not followed.

"Hence, the people who signed could not have known that:

"• The term limits on members of the legislature would be lifted and thus members of Parliament could be reelected indefinitely.

"• The interim Parliament would continue to function indefinitely until its members, who are almost all the present members of Congress, should decide to call for new parliamentary elections; thus, the members of the interim Parliament would determine the expiration of their own term of office.

"• Within 45 days from the ratification of the proposed changes, the interim Parliament should convene to propose further amendments or revisions to the Constitution."

These provisions were never presented to the people by Sigaw and Ulap nor discussed in the numerous rallies and conferences they organized to gather signatures. Why would they? Had the people known that the changes contained these onerous and selfish provisions, they would not have signed it.

Thus, even in the presentation of the changes to the Charter, there was already deceit on the part of the proponents. The people were made to believe that the change would only be from presidential to a parliamentary form of government and that the change would be advantageous to the nation because it would prevent the present gridlock in Congress that delays the passage of legislation for the benefit of the people. They did not say that all the bases would be loaded in favor of the incumbent legislators. Not until the Supreme Court handed down its decision did this selfish reasons for Cha-cha come out.

In other words, Cha-cha is not for the good of the people at all but for selfish reasons of the present congressmen and local government executives. Here, we have a glaring example of why the Constitution prohibits legislators from passing laws to benefit them personally. But here in the Cha-cha, they have found a good excuse to get around that prohibition. And that is why they were the ones pushing hardest for it.

The present people's initiative is not a people's initiative at all but a "politicians' initiative," specifically of Jose de Venecia and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. That people's initiative provision was put in the 1987 Charter by the Constitutional Commission to institutionalize people power, which catapulted Cory Aquino to power. Its intent was to allow amendments to come directly from the people.

But what the present politicians did was to hijack the initiative from the people. They wrote the proposed changes and tricked the people into signing blank pieces of paper without explaining to them what they were signing. On that fact alone, the Sigaw and Ulap petitions should have been quickly thrown into the wastebasket without delving into the other reasons for rejecting it.

As the INQUIRER headline put it very clearly yesterday: "SC: Cha-cha bid a fraud."

'A gigantic fraud on the people'

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

MANILA HAD BEEN ABUZZ WITH RUMOR on this historic decision, and on Wednesday, it was high noon at the high court when the justices convened for the final showdown. Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban—who shepherded the Supreme Court through its earlier rulings on the "calibrated pre-emptive response," EO 464 and Proclamation 1017—broke the tie for a Court which was split down the middle on a case that would have sealed the fate of our democracy.

Until then, we were anxious about a repeat of the 1973 Javellana decision, when the Court did a Pontius Pilate and looked the other way after Marcos had his constitution approved by a mere show of hands in bogus barangay assemblies while we were under martial law.

Justice Antonio Carpio, writing for the majority, rejected the petition by Sigaw ng Bayan: "An initiative that gathers signatures from the people without first showing to the people the full text of the proposed amendments is most likely a deception, and can operate as a gigantic fraud on the people."

Petitioner Raul Lambino had admitted before the Court that the 6.3 million signatories were not shown the actual text of the changes they were supposedly endorsing but merely a brief summary that left the true amendments unstated, uncertain and therefore manipulable, including transitory provisions that, during the Marcos years, proved themselves to be ominous.

In addition, the Court found, the Lambino proposals amounted to a "revision." They would overhaul two entire articles of the charter (on the Congress and the President), affecting a total of 105 provisions. They would alter the fundamental balance among the "great powers of government."

The Chief Justice explained why the amendment/revision distinction is not merely a matter of form. "A revision may be done only when the proposed change can be [formulated] after a mature and democratic debate in a deliberative body like Congress or a Convention." There is good reason, therefore, that the drafters of the 1987 Constitution limited direct initiatives to spot "amendments" and reserved major "revisions" to Congress or a constitutional convention.

The dissenters argued that the case be remanded to the Comelec so that it may settle questions of fact on whether the Lambino group had satisfied the threshold percentages fixed in the Constitution.

This, the majority rebuffed. Remanding the Lambino petition on questions of fact wouldn't cure its legal infirmities. Besides, the Chief Justice reminds us in his separate opinion of the historical "handwashing" and "cop-out" by the Court that decided on Javellana.

Beyond the technicalities, however, it was clear that the larger politics was not lost on the justices, whether in the Pirma decisions of 1997 or in Lambino's Pirma déjà vu of 2006.

Carpio noted how the Lambino group "admits that their 'people's' initiative is an 'unqualified support to the agenda' of [President Macapagal-Arroyo] to change the Constitution." This, he says, "forewarns the Court to be wary of incantations of 'people's voice' or 'sovereign will' in the present initiative."

The other justices were just as curt. Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez, who asked the most pointed questions during oral arguments, confronted the "Vox populi, vox Dei" conundrum: "Yes, the voice of the people is the voice of God. But under the circumstances in this case, the voice of God is not audible."

The Chief Justice would guard against "bogus efforts falsely attributed to the sovereign people," lest the charter "be trivialized and degraded by the assaults of the mob and of ill-conceived designs."

Carpio warned that the Constitution must not be hostage to what the US Supreme Court called "shifting political majorities." "To allow such change in the fundamental law is to set adrift the Constitution in uncharted waters, to be tossed and turned by every dominant political group of the day. [To allow today] a cavalier change in the Constitution outside the constitutionally prescribed modes, tomorrow the new dominant political group that comes will demand its own set of changes in the same cavalier and unconstitutional fashion. A revolving-door constitution does not augur well for the rule of law in this country."

Had the Court upheld the sham initiative, it would have dealt the coup de grâce to Edsa I, sadder still, by its (Edsa's) own hand since the people's initiative clause was meant to codify people power into law. *Et tu,* Your Honor? By rejecting the sham initiative, the Court has shown us that we can make the Constitution work, by a threadbare majority, yes, but given our fragile politics, that is reason enough to rejoice. There is hope, and they who would twist and flex the law to betray its spirit are warned that "the least dangerous branch" may not command troops or hold the purse, but it wields the power of an "idea whose time has come."

Significantly, the two most senior nominees to become the next chief justice, Justices Reynato Puno and Leonardo Quisumbing, both dissented from the majority. President Arroyo has not been coy at all about her support for Lambino's initiative, and the two justices' dissents certainly won't hurt their bid to succeed Panganiban. But since neither Puno nor Quisumbing carried the majority, all earlier speculation that deals and promises had been made must be put to rest. All bets are off, and the President will choose the next chief justice painfully aware that her appointee might, heaven forbid, actually live up to his or her oath to be independent and to uphold the Constitution.

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Ominous polarization in Supreme Court

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

ASIDE FROM THE INFORMED LEGAL COMMENTaries on the Supreme Court's decision dismissing the petition for a people's initiative to change the Constitution, a few noteworthy developments have stood out in its wake.

Among these is that the 8-7 decision was one of the closest vote the Court ever made on key constitutional issues since 2001, when it decided 13-0 to dismiss the petition challenging the legitimacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo's takeover, and 9-4 to rule that deposed President Joseph Estrada did not have immunity from prosecution on plunder charges laid against him at the Sandiganbayan.

These decisive votes set the tone of subsequent decisions, until the recent rulings striking down the proclamation of national emergency in February and the presidential order banning Cabinet officials from testifying in congressional hearings without the President's permission. All these decisions, including that on people's initiative, were landmark rulings and were handed down in the midst of political crises.

So, when the Court voted 8-7 the other day to dismiss the petition to make the Commission on Elections hold as referendum, this was a departure from a pattern, a deviation that provoked questions on what it portends.

To the credit of the Court, it did not shirk from making a decision with dispatch on the people's initiative petition, which cried for an early resolution because of the approaching 2007 mid-term elections and the imminent retirement of Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, which could have meant a shift of the balance of the vote in the Court. There was a chorus of praises from all parties for the dispatch with which the Court decided on the case, but there were sharply dissenting views on other aspects of the case.

Although the independence of the Court had never been at issue in the previous decisions, this time, questions about the fairness of the Court were raised on the eve of its decision. But these doubts did not prevent the justices from conscientiously stating their views. The majority opinion, penned by Justice Antonio Carpio, was noted for its strong language which held that "an initiative that gathers signatures from the people without first showing to the people the full text of the proposed amendments is most likely a deception, that can operate as a gigantic fraud on the people." No less emphatic in rebuffing the initiative, and in effect the administration which sponsored the project, the Chief Justice, in a separate concurring opinion, waxed eloquent, saying the Court stood at the "crossroads of history," and its decision would be remembered in history "either in shame or pride."

There's no doubt that the majority opinion rang with conviction and expressed strongly held views, but this does not mask the significant fact that the decision revealed a Court that is deeply divided on the issue of constitutional change. With the decision sitting on the narrowest of margins, the minority opinion cannot be dismissed lightly in its implications for using the people's initiative as a mode for constitutional change.

The majority voted to dismiss the petition of Sigaw ng Bayan to overturn the decision of the Comelec rejecting a move to amend the Constitution through a people's initiative on the ground that the petition failed to comply with the requirements of the Constitution, i.e., that the initiative must be "directly proposed by the people through initiative upon a petition." The majority held that there was no need to revisit the 1997 Court ruling that the law regulating the people's right of initiative was "inadequate to cover the system of initiative on amendments or amendments to the Constitution and to have failed to provide sufficient standard for subordinate legislation." It held that the petitioners' "failure to comply with the basic requirements of the Constitution" warranted its dismissal.

The minority voted not to order the Comelec to conduct a plebiscite on the proposals for change but to remand the petition to the poll body for a determination of whether or not the constitutional requirement of "three percent per district" was followed. The minority opinion, penned by Senior Justice Reynato Puno, took issue with the majority on whether the proposals sought by the petition for constitutional change involved "revision" of or "amendments" to the Constitution. While these issues revealed important divisions in the Court, the decision left little doubt that the people's initiative had been effectively stopped as a mode for constitutional change.

This now throws the effort of the administration to fast-track Cha-cha back to what administration strategists call "Plan B": convening a constituent assembly to propose amendments to the Charter, an option that does not appear promising.

From this perspective, the Court's decision is a shattering setback to the project of constitutional revision either as a scheme to ensure the survival of the Arroyo regime or as a fundamental reform to restructure the political system. The fight for constitutional change has now moved back to the political arena. This promises further turbulent confrontations between the administration and its opponents as the country moves toward the 2007 election. In this arena, the administration can deploy its enormous political and economic resources to its advantage, to influence the poll outcome.

It appears that the administration spared no effort to put pressure—subtle or overt—on the Supreme Court to influence its decision. But by its decision, the Court demonstrated its independence, despite anxieties in public opinion surveys over whether it would hand down a "fair" decision.

Muslim garb and 'othering'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A FRIEND WHO LIVED IN RIYADH, SAUDI ARAbia, for many years recalls one run-in with the *mutaween* or religious police over the way she wore her *abaya*. The *abaya* is a long, flowing over-garment, usually black, that is worn by women in conservative Muslim societies whenever they step out in public. (The *burqa*, which covers a woman from head to toe and covers even her face, with netting over her eyes to allow her to see where she's going, is more common in Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan and India.)

My friend was in a street bazaar with her husband and children, and she wore an *abaya* over her street dress. But she forgot to button the garment all the way up ("it was a warm day," she explains) and was soon spotted by a *mutaween*. The religious enforcers roam the streets armed with thin flexible sticks to enforce "proper" behavior and deportment among the populace. "He started shouting and pointing at me and ran towards me, brandishing his stick," my friend recalls. Fortunately, she and her family were able to get away, but still, it was a close call.

This story recalls the account of New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd who, because of her columns critical of the way Saudi Arabia treated its women, was invited to pay a visit to the country and "see for herself" the real conditions under which Saudi women lived. Inside a shopping mall (where she spotted an inordinate number of Victoria's Secret and other sexy lingerie stores), she was spotted by a *mutaween* who found something wrong with the way she wore her *abaya*. Dowd was chased down the corridors and would have been whipped had not her guides intervened and explained who she was. Talk about first-hand experience!

* * *

THESE stories may well be exceptions (though the persistence of the *mutaween* and other such enforcers belies this) and did involve foreign women. But they are the other side of the coin of the contention of Yvonne Ridley, a British convert to Islam, who asserted in an article, titled "How I Came to Love the Veil," that most Muslim women welcome and enjoy adopting the *hijab* —which is the term for the more common veil or kerchief that Muslim women use around the world, but also refers to the injunction for "modesty" in dress and behavior.

"Why are Western men so obsessed with Muslim women's attire?" Ridley asks. Even British government ministers Brown and Reid "have made disparaging remarks about the *nikab* (the veil that covers the face save for the eyes)," she writes, "and they hail from across the Scottish border, where men wear skirts."

"Some young Muslim feminists consider the *hijab* and the *nikab* political symbols, too, a way of rejecting Western excesses such as binge drinking, casual sex and drug use," writes Ridley. "What is more liberating: being judged on the length of your skirt and the size of your surgically enhanced breasts, or being judged on your character and intelligence? In Islam, superiority is achieved through piety—not beauty, wealth, power, position or sex."

* * *

ACTUALLY, Muslim women's motives in wearing or not wearing concealing garments is not the point of the criticism aired by a British politician about how the *nikab* gets in the way of "full integration" of Arab, Pakistani, Indian and other women into British society.

Maybe the politician was referring to the "freak out" factor discussed in the previous column, or of the "othering" effect of such dress—emphasizing the women's differences from the majority of the population, and indeed their aloofness from it.

In much the same way that Saudi Arabia and the *mutaween* require all women within their territory to don the *abaya* in public, regardless of their religion or personal preference, do other countries with large migrant populations also have the right to require migrant or minority women to "blend in" with the majority and not seek to stand out by way of their "strange" dress?

I offer no answers here. Perhaps there will always be tension between the rights of minorities and their responsibility to move towards integration; between a state's right to seek to create a national identity while respecting the rights of individuals and distinct communities.

While people once talked of the "melting pot" ideal of a multicultural society—where differences are subsumed into a bland "stew" of sameness—new thinking now offers up the image of a "salad," a society where various "influences" mingle and co-exist, and yet retain their distinctive flavors and appearances.

* * *

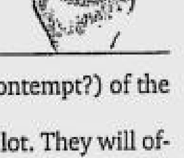
IN MARAWI City, the city council a few years ago issued an ordinance requiring all women, regardless of ethnic origin or belief, within the city boundaries to wear the *hijab*, as a sign of respect for the city's "Islamic" character.

When we feminists heard this piece of news, we were immediately fired up to organize some form of protest over this "oppressive" ruling. But our Muslim sisters, veiled and unveiled, seemed strangely sanguine about it. Apparently, for them, wearing a veil was a non-issue, a brief inconvenience (if at all) worth bearing with if only to avoid unwelcome attention and social censure.

Now, I'm the sort who would bristle (and did) whenever a priest would rail against women in sleeveless dresses or shorts who dared approach the altar for Communion, or school uniform regulations dictating the length of the skirt or the wearing of undershirts beneath one's blouse. But when I visit Islamic countries, I do take care of the way I dress, much the same way I would dress with extra care if I were to attend a conference or deliver a speech.

But I can't help wondering: Why all this fuss being made over women's clothing? I still have to hear some big fish railing about men in shorts or those sporting shiny nail polish.

First visit to the archives



LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

LAST FRIDAY, I WAS INVITED TO DELIVER some remarks on the 105th anniversary of the Records Management and Archives Office, a little-known cultural agency that, with forthcoming legislation, hopes to rightfully become the Pambansang Sinupan or National Archives. The office still squats on a corner of the National Library building on T.M. Kalaw Street on the south side of Rizal Park. The staff looked cheerful and, most important, the office has undergone a very dramatic face-lift—it is now air-conditioned, with state-of-the-art conservation and scanning equipment, thanks to a generous grant from the Kingdom of Spain. I recognized some familiar faces in the crowd, people who assisted me when I visited the place regularly for research two decades ago.

Since then, I have been busy cutting ribbons, delivering speeches and writing blurbs or introductions for other people's books instead of trying to complete my own books. Visiting the archives again not as a researcher but as its once and future director induced ambivalent feelings. I was offered the post of RMAO director not once but twice. Twice I refused. Looking back on the road not taken, I wonder whether I should regret those decisions or not.

Frankly, I am happiest in a classroom teaching or researching in a library or archive. It is primary source research that makes my newspaper column and my classroom lectures different. If only I could spare more time to sift through the records of our past in search of something new.

I remember entering the RMAO for the first time, going into the reading room and being handed a rather grimy folder containing a list of the bundles of documents sorted out and ready for research. At the time, I did not really know what I was looking for, or if I was looking for anything at all. I just wanted to see some old documents. I requested what appeared to be the safest subject on the list: "Rizal." And as I filled up the request form, I could sense the pity (or was it contempt?) of the other researchers in the room.

Historians are a rather gossipy lot. They will often try to know what other people in the room are working on without actually asking. Some examine the researchers' log book to see who have been there and what they listed down as documents requested. Others pass by your table to peek at bundles you requested. Some will even follow the documents to the photocopying machine just to satisfy their curiosity.

On my first visit, one of the "senior" researchers could not contain himself and, as I waited for my bundle, approached and whispered in my ear, "Why did you request the Rizal bundle? What do you expect to find that hasn't been seen by a whole army of scholars before you? Don't you know that everything on Rizal has been written already?"

I did not know what to say, so I just returned to my seat and swallowed my pride. I told myself that now that I have been embarrassed, I might as well sit there and pretend to read what came. If I couldn't find anything, I intended to just leave quietly and never return.

So the bundle or *legajo* was delivered to my desk. It was a stack of documents wrapped in Manila paper and secured with straw. On top of the bundle was a note from James Alexander Robertson (he of "Blair and Robertson" fame, the former director of the National Library) that said that he had transferred all documents by Rizal from the archives to the library. Yet there were still materials in the bundle and these happened to be the correspondence of Rizal's sisters. They may not have been in the hand of the national hero, but these letters contained the context in which Rizal lived and they reflected the place he held in a family he loved unconditionally.

There were little bits of family lore, like the orders to sell a chestnut brown horse because they needed cash to buy a birthday gift for their father. If I'm not mistaken, there were a lot of numbers in the letters, some being accounts and others lotto number combinations. Here was the Rizal family from the eyes of his sisters. I do wonder why Robertson left these letters in the archives instead of moving everything on Rizal to the library.

One wonders why the American Rizal scholar Austin Craig did not recommend this course of action either. So the letters remained there, hardly used because they were in danger of disintegrating from each use.

There was an odd document dated a few months after Rizal's execution (May 1897, if I'm not mistaken) that records rumors that Rizal was alive and well. There were Rizal sightings in various places in Manila. There was even a rendezvous between Rizal (executed in 1896) and Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora (executed in 1872)! Now that was really strange.

Thus encouraged by this experience, I have since dug up files on divorce, abortion, fiestas, monuments and even the Manila visits in the late 19th century of the Duke of Edinburgh, the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia and Norodom I, King of Cambodia, who toured the country and even fell in love with a woman from Bulacan.

One could say that the RMAO rightly or wrongly made me follow the path of Clio. My visit there last Friday was a way of saying thank you, and a way of letting the RMAO staff know that they will be seeing more of me in the future.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

'Mabuhay'

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

TODAY I'M GOING TO DO ANOTHER TWO-IN-ONE COLumn, one on trees and the other on our Supreme Court justices. My title, "Mabuhay," is meant to give you a hint of the drift of the articles, but before going into the topics, let me do something about "*mabuhay*" itself, in effect giving you a three-in-one column.

The origins of "*mabuhay*" are unknown. Maybe it was intended as a way of arousing public emotions and creating a sense of solidarity, as in "*Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!*" I suspect, too, that it was used for rulers, as in "*Mabuhay ang Datu!*" The Chinese "*Wan sui!*" and the Japanese "*Banzai!*" both mean "May you live ten thousand years." (I suspect though that deep down, many subjects, chafing under the despotic rule of their emperors, probably preferred that their rulers had shorter lives.)

I digress. Adopting "*mabuhay*" as a greeting reflects the way we look at life. On one hand, we know how precious, and precarious, life is in the Philippines. So many Filipinos live day to day, barely surviving, so that even work is referred to as *hanap-buhay*, a search for life. Each additional day, particularly for the very young and the very old, is a reason to be thankful. Maybe, too, that's why birthdays, especially of children, are celebrated with much fanfare, a way of saying "*Mabuhay ka, anak,*" often to the point of excess.

While we see life as difficult, we do love life, so wishing someone "*mabuhay,*" may you live on and on and on, is intended as the ultimate in graciousness. It says something of our zest for life and more. Note how "*mabuhay*" is left unsaid for friends. We say it more for people we have just met, for visitors, "*mabuhay*" becoming an invitation to friendship, maybe for life.

Trees

I am glad the INQUIRER published a letter from Sonia Mendoza of Mother Earth Foundation, where she points out that the typhoon-damaged trees should have been saved by replanting.

I couldn't agree more. I can understand the need to saw off fallen parts of the tree to clear the streets, but to uproot them was, well, murderous. After all, the government just launched its greening campaign and by uprooting trees, some of which are several decades old, we have to start all over again.

Trees are evolutionary wonders, with complicated structures and physiological processes that are still being unraveled by scientists. They offer us lessons for life in the way they grow, ever so slowly but surely. Each tree is a powerhouse that generates and stores all it needs to survive through the most adverse of circumstances: floods, droughts, fires.

My parents brought in two workers to clean up their garden and they certainly were as murderous as the ones who cleared the streets. They hacked away, pulled up some young saplings and would have gotten to the older trees if I hadn't intervened. Sensing I wasn't quite happy with what they had done, they quickly put back some of the trees they had uprooted and, for good measure, sheepishly stuck a few branches into the soil. "*Bubuhay ulit.*" they assured me.

I knew they would. Within a few days, the saplings were on their way to recovery and the branches, goodness, were sprouting leaves almost with a vengeance.'

Trees vary in their ability to thrive, but generally they're amazingly sturdy. More appreciative humans have turned that to our advantage, finding ways to transplant tree species thousands of miles away from their original habitat, captivated by some useful aspect of the tree: food, medicine, construction material, or just plain aesthetics, the beauty of its flowers, for example.

There's even a romantic side to the trees' hardiness. In Southeast Asia we tend to associate the *kalatsutsi* tree (known elsewhere as plumiera or frangipani) with death because the trees are planted in cemeteries. But in Latin countries, the plumiera speaks a different language. Women would give a plumiera branch to their husbands or lovers before they set off on a long trip. The sturdy cuttings would survive long voyages and, planted in a new land, would flower and remind the men of their loved ones back home.

Next time you look at those *kalatsutsi* in your backyard (or, for students at UP, at the towering ones around Palma Hall), remember they're probably descended from stock dating back to the Spanish colonial period, brought over by some lovesick soldier or friar. And it need not have been a woman they left behind.

Justices

The Supreme Court decision was more, much more, than what many of us expected. Just a few days before the decision, we saw one public opinion poll showing that 60 percent of the public didn't trust the Supreme Court.

I wasn't too sure either. I have great respect for Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, having read his books and appreciating the breadth and depth of his wisdom. But we live in amoral, opportunistic times, where might spells right. It would have been easy for the justices to rule in favor of the gods and goddesses and taking a chance with the public, given the weary apathy we Filipinos have about public affairs.

While the 21st century ushered in new hopes for most of the world, we've found ourselves on a downward spiral. For many Filipinos, the solution has been disengagement, yes, a drastic uprooting. The ones who stay have become more and more apolitical, too busy trying to survive, as in *hanap-buhay*, searching for life, hopes pinned on putting children through school so they can leave.

What bothered me most about the so-called people's initiative was the way it was riding on that despair. After robbing us blind, trampling on every sense of decency and morality, these politicians now had the gall tell us that their initiative would turn us around, get the economy going, build a strong republic.

Jose de Venecia, the mastermind here, wailed about how the Supreme Court had dwelled on technicalities instead of so-called benefits that their initiative would bring. But the justices saw otherwise: the nation's survival hinges on those technicalities, intricate safeguards that are products, in a sense, of a long evolution of our political system. The 1987 Constitution is not perfect, but it was a well-crafted response to dictatorship.

There will come a time when constitutional change will be appropriate. Until that happens, though, we can only hope the Supreme Court retains its integrity, given the way the executive and legislative branches have been emasculated. The justices didn't mince words in their decision, calling the campaign a "fraud," a "deception." Strong words that reflect wise minds and good hearts, and I mean good in the more powerful sense of *mabait*, being ethical and caring. We Filipinos should find reason to hope again.

The "people's initiative" is not dead, certainly, and we can expect more storms, more challenges to the Supreme Court. You can guess the metaphor I have in mind for our justices, and how we need to wish them *mabuhay*.

Pols making their presence felt

RANDY DAVID IS RIGHT—PUBLIC utilities are called "public" because their primary duty is to see to it that public interest is served, met and upheld over and above everything else. (PDI, 10/16/06)

Here in Legazpi, large parts of the city, including commercial areas, are still without electricity. In our neighborhood, all the electrical posts and lines damaged or felled by typhoon Milenyo remain long after the typhoon. Untouched by any repair crew from Albay Electric Cooperative, they either block roads or hang precariously in front of houses. It looks like, come Nov. 1, we will be lighting candles not in the tombs of our dear departed but in our own homes.

Aleco's snail-paced power restoration work is beyond me. It has proudly announced that teams from other provinces are here to help speed up rehabilitation work. Just last week, I read that three more teams are coming from Manila to complement the rehabilitation crews.

In November 1987, when typhoon "Sisang" hit Bicol region, it took about two months to restore electric service; 19 years and many typhoons later, despite all the technological advancements, the same story is unfolding.

It seems Aleco has been left behind by the times, it has not learned anything from its experiences with past typhoons. It still doesn't have a rehabilitation program that it can implement with speed and efficiency.

In fairness to Aleco, it may be doing the best it can. But its best has not been enough, and public interest demands that electricity be restored at the earliest possible time. No ifs, ands, or buts there.

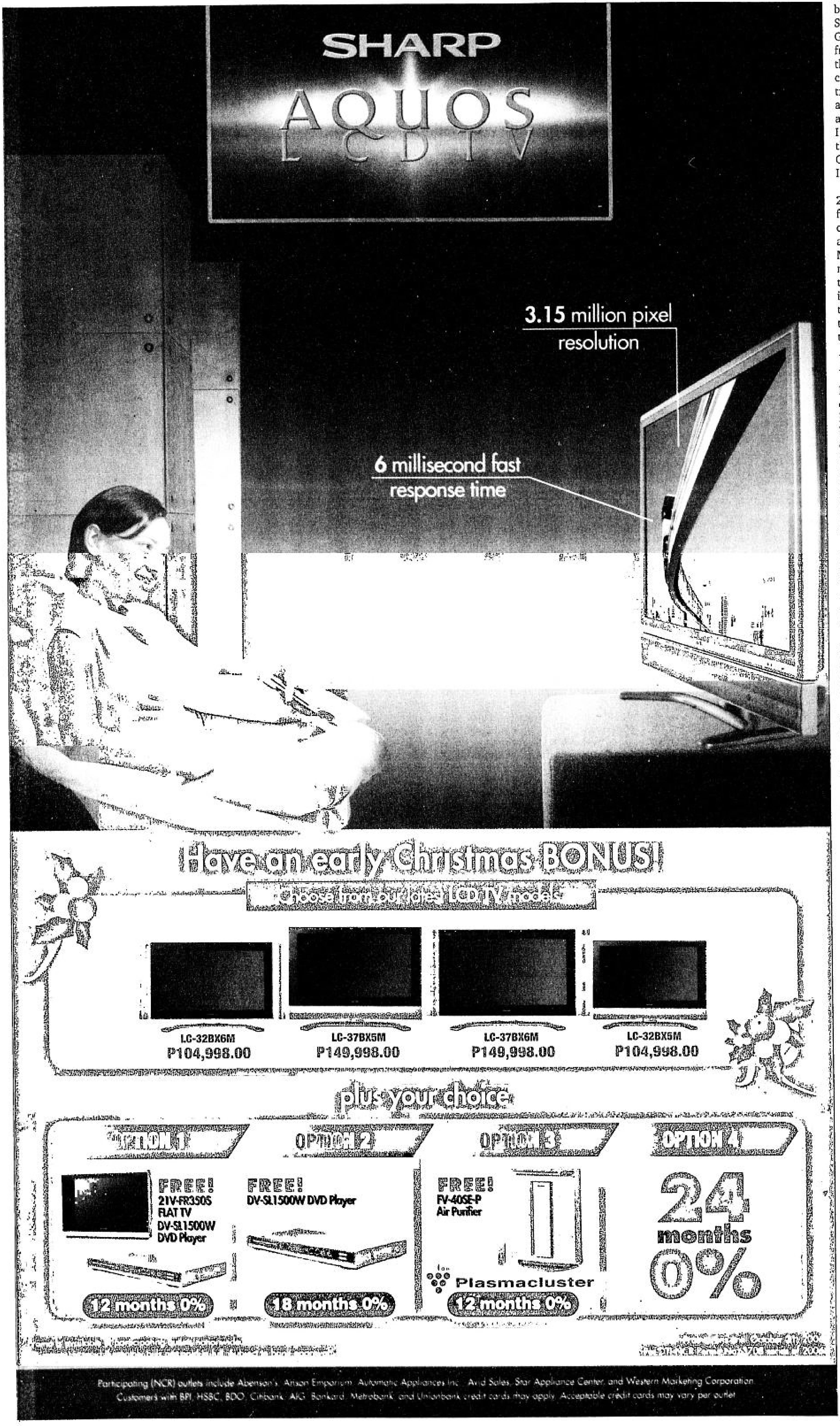
The irony is that a number of streamers are hanging along major roads here, thanking a certain presidential adviser on rural electrification, NEA heads and others for "bringing back" electricity. And then, there too, are the vehicles running around the city carrying huge placards announcing the "Pa-ilaw project of Joey Salceda and PGMA."

We have tried sending e-mail to Representative Salceda, asking him to include our area in the list of "Pa-ilaw" priorities, especially because our neighborhood's unfinished water system depends on electricity to operate. Unfortunately, we have not received any reply from him either. Maybe, he and his staff are busy making more placards with his name boldly written on them.

We have likewise sent e-mail to our city mayor, Noel Rosal, through the city's official website. We have not heard from him either. Maybe, he would rather finish first the beautification project in the commercial district (which incidentally involves installation of decorative light posts) than make sure that electricity is restored in every home here. He may have had a lot of accomplishments, but his response to our brownout problem has been simply dismal. As the city's chief executive, he has all the powers and resources to help, cajole and compel Aleco to speed up the restoration of electricity in the city.

So much for public interest.

—BRYAN JAO,
Barangay Bagong Abre,
Legazpi City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DENR clarifies issues on Ifma holder

OUR OFFICE, THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Region 4 Calabarzon, is a regular subscriber of the INQUIRER. In many instances in the past, the INQUIRER helped our agency to reach out to our various stakeholders. Allow us to take this opportunity to thank the INQUIRER for helping us explain to the concerned public the issue on Timberland Forest Products Inc. (TFPI), a holder of an Integrated Forest Management Agreement (Ifma) with this office.

However, please allow us to clarify some points which may have caused some "misperceptions" among INQUIRER readers.

1. During the Oct. 16 public hearing conducted by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Quezon, I never pointed or alluded to Malacañang as a backer of logging in Sierra Madre. Simple as it may have appeared, the news item may have raised some wrong ideas. I hope it did not.

For a backgrounder on the issue:

The Ifma of TFPI, which was approved on Nov. 12, 2002, was canceled sometime in January 2004 by then Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun for reasons of fraud, particularly on the issues of financial capability and on a tribal claim to some area covered by the agreement. However, I briefly explained these issues in the Oct. 19 issue of the INQUIRER.

Then on Jan. 30, 2004, the company filed a motion for reconsideration. After almost a year, on March 4, 2005, the Ifma was reinstated by the Office of the President. What was actually approved, after undergoing a thorough review and study, was the legality and the procedural aspect of the lease agreement.

2. Our office would like to emphasize that, until now, TFPI is not operating inside its lease agreement area. However, it is among those involved in the log-retrieval operation being done, under the supervision of the DENR, along Agos River and the shores of General Nakar and Infanta.

—ANTONIO G. PRINCIPE,
Ceso 3, regional executive director,
Department of Environment and Natural Resources,
Region 4-Calabarzon

I stated in my report that regional director Antonio Principe defended Malacañang's decision to reinstate the controversial forest management contract in Sierra Madre. I never directly stated in any part of the report that Malacañang was a "Sierra Madre logging backer." I believe though that Principe's revelation left that impression on the members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

—DELFIN T. MALLARI JR.,
correspondent,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Intrusive 'ambush' media

IF BILLBOARD ADVERTISING IS A FORM of freedom, as Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez has said, then allowing trees to grow in front of billboards violates a basic right of billboard owners. To be sure, trees that hinder the motorists' view of billboards should be cut down and destroyed by the government, otherwise the state would be answerable for allowing the violation of the "freedom of expression of billboard owners and advertisers," including the billboard's "right to be seen."

Billboard advertising is certainly a commercial or a moneymaking venture. It makes a few people earn lots of money while posing serious danger to communities. But it has caused deaths, injuries and damage to property, especially during typhoons, as we recently saw in the wake of typhoon "Milenyo."

Billboards are not only ugly. They are also intrusive, while providing very little information, if at all. They only make the metropolis and the countryside look messy, like a school of screaming children.

Unlike other advertising media, billboards are "ambush media"—they can't be turned off and are visible to children 24/7.

Aside from billboard advertising, there are other means of reaching out to consumers, foremost of which is to sell goods and services at lower cost so more people, especially the poor, would benefit from what they display.

—REY S. PARADERO,
Block 1, Lot 3, Violago Road,
Violago Homes Phase II,
Bagong Silangan, Quezon City

Disconnection question

I AM ONE OF THE MANY CUSTOMERS OF PLDT (with Telesulit line). Our telephone, 780-1346, was cut off in the first week of September with no apparent reason or a disconnection notice from PLDT.

I understand that a Telesulit line is automatically cut off after two months of "non-loading." But my wife and I make sure we don't go beyond that limit.

I call the attention of the management of PLDT, which has been adjudged as Euromoney's "Best Managed Firm in Asia," to check on this matter. I'm also appealing to them to immediately reconnect our line. I know that there are lots of others out there who are similarly situated, but they have no time to voice out their sentiments.

—VICTOR B. ALBAYALDE,
supervisor, Program Mgt. Group,
Maynilad Water Services Inc.,
MWSS Compound, Balara, Quezon City

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Reasonable oil spill claims sought

By Dona Pazzibugan, *in Manila*
and Nestor Burgos Jr., *Inquirer Visayas*

GUIMARAS FISHERMEN WERE advised to file "reasonable" claims for lost earnings from the Petron oil spill so they can collect soon from the International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC).

Government officials said the fishermen will be the first to receive compensation from the IOPC, which has agreed to settle claims of the oil spill victims during its executive meeting last Oct. 24 in London.

An estimated 3,000 to 4,000 fishermen suffered as a result of the oil spill, according to Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr.

"We will start with the claims of the fishermen. Those of the government's can follow," said Anthony Golez, Office of Civil Defense (OCD) deputy administrator, in a news conference in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

"The claims have to be reasonable and properly documented, based on actual lost earnings and expenses incurred (for the cleanup)," said Rafael Coscolluela, presidential adviser for Western Visayas, who headed the Philippine delegation to the IOPC meeting.

He said most of the fishermen have authorized their governor or congressman to represent them in their claims.

"The IOPC has recognized that, that's why they are pro-active in the case of Guimaras," he said.

Resort owners directly filed their claims with the IOPC since they have documented income statements.

"There's no deadline to the filing of claims. The IOPC knows it's hard for fishermen to submit documents," he said.

In Nueva Valencia, Guimaras, hundreds of residents of Guimaras held a prayer rally to demand the removal of the remaining oil from the MT Solar I and for more economic assistance from the government, the tanker's owners and Petron Corp.

At least 500 residents, mostly fishermen, from 10 villages severely affected by the oil spill gathered at the Nueva Valencia public plaza to ask the national government and Petron to provide them with livelihood.

The protest action was the first since the tanker sank on Aug. 11 23.4 km from the southern coast of Nueva Valencia town in Guimaras.

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MILF says drugs 'haram'

COTABATO CITY—ANYTHING destructive is *haram* (forbidden) as far as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is concerned.

"This is our stand and a matter of policy regarding prohibited drugs," said MILF vice chair for political affairs Ghadzali Jaafar.

He said, in the past, misguided MILF members caught cultivating marijuana were subjected to extreme sanctions by the central committee.

"We don't tolerate evil," Jaafar said in reference to the ill effects brought about by marijuana and other illegal drugs.

Jaafar's statement came after Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte's recent exposé of suspected Mindanao drug lords that included Parang, Maguindanao Mayor Talib Abo, who was allegedly caught with 3.5 kg of shabu but was released by policemen.

Abo denied the accusation. "Why is it that up to now, there is no warrant for my arrest?" he asked.

Gregorio Digao, a tribal affairs assistant of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, who was arrested by police and narcotics agents at a bus terminal here on Oct. 21, also named Abo as one of his shabu suppliers, according to Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency regional director Rene Orbe.

Digao, a resident of Tagum City who holds office in Digos City, was caught with 10 grams of shabu. *Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

Governors, mayors, councilors want machine counting for polls

By Chito Fuentes
Inquirer Visayas

TAGBILARAN CITY—GOVERNORS, MAYORS and councilors allied with President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday pushed for the automation of next year's elections using machines that have already been paid for by the government and are stored in Comelec warehouses.

But Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado, head of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap), said the endorsement should in no way be interpreted as the local government executives giving up on Charter change.

Aumentado said in a phone interview that the endorsement of the use of computers, that were certified accurate by the Department of Science and Technology, had been the position of his group and of groups of mayors and councilors nationwide.

"This is in line with our desire to have clean and orderly elections," Aumentado said.

Aumentado said the issue was not about the scheduled elections in 2007 but the negative perceptions on the conduct of elections in the country, as a whole, and computerization would be one way to solve that problem.

"We are endorsing the use of the automated counting machines (ACMs) in the 2007 elections because they were certified as accurate and functional by the Department of Science and Technology," Aumentado was earlier quoted as saying in a statement.

The League of Cities, a group of the country's city mayors; the League of Municipalities, a group of the country's municipal mayors; the Vice Mayors' League of the Philippines and the Philippine Councilors' League made the endorsement with Ulap.

A resolution was signed by Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn, head of the League of Cities; Biliran Mayor Gerry Espina, spokesperson of the League of Municipalities; Councilor Carlo Fortuna, head of the Philippine Councilors' League to support the endorsement.

"We better utilize the ACMs (automated counting machines) now being kept at the Commission on Elections warehouse and deploy these units across the country," Aumentado was quoted in the statement as saying.

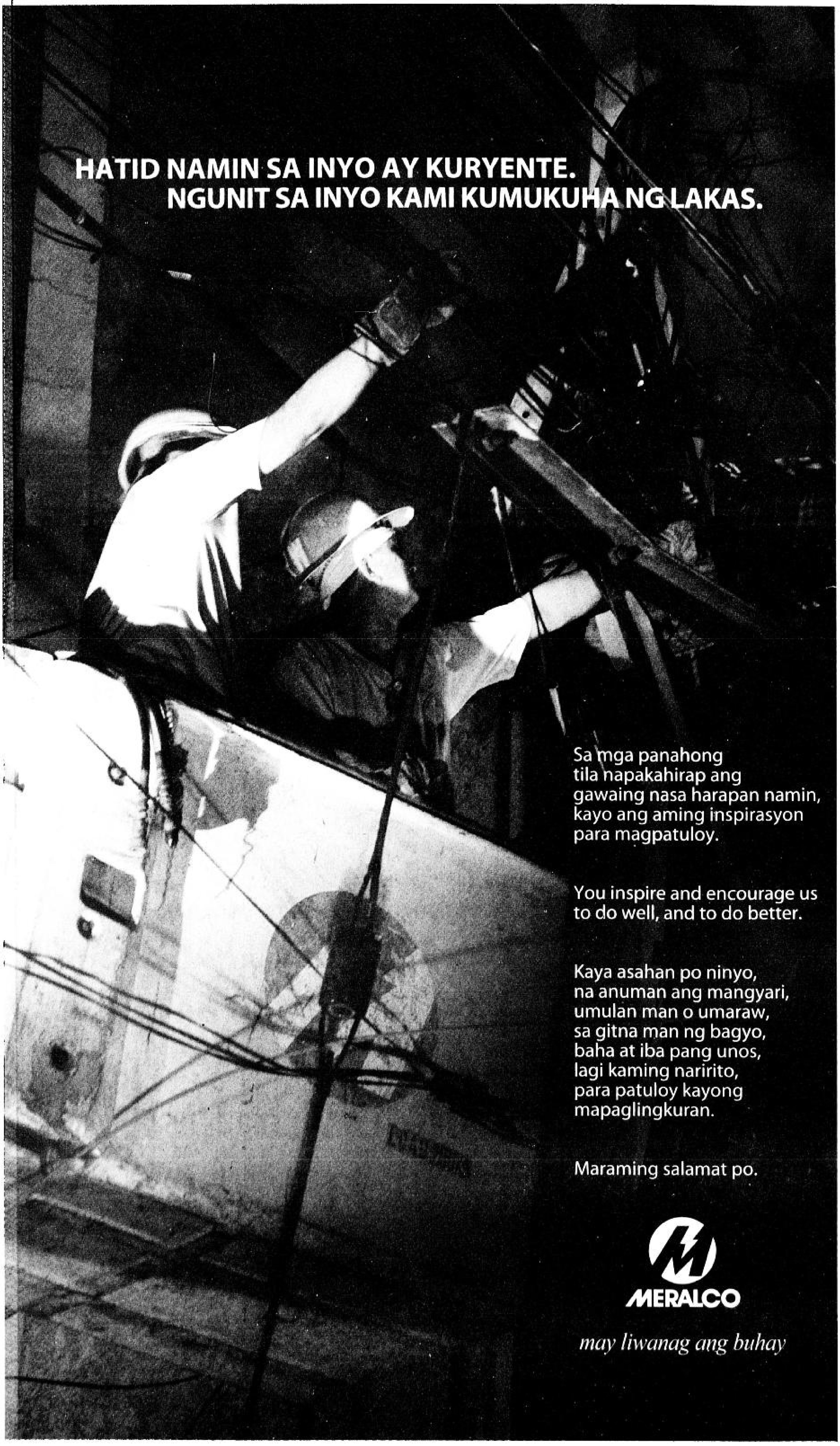
The Supreme Court ordered the Comelec not to touch the machines, supplied by the Mega Pacific Consortium while a civil case is now pending to return the machines to Mega Pacific and collect the money paid for them.

Sen. Richard Gordon filed a bill automating next year's elections but proposing the use of direct recording electronic (DRE) machines, which are different from the ones that are stored in the Comelec warehouse.

The purchase of the new DRE machines was estimated to cost at least P1.6 billion.

A DRE machine requires each voter to input his vote directly. Each precinct has an average of 200 voters and election time is usually from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. The estimated time for a voter to finish voting with the use of the DRE machines was 16 hours.

The existing ACMs requires voters to fill in ballots manually. These are fed to the machines for counting.



Shippers oppose channel closure

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—SHIPPING OPERATORS IN CEbu opposed the proposed closure of the Mactan Channel to sea vessels during the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit on Dec. 11-13.

Chester Cokaliong, president of the Visayan Association of Ferryboats and Coastwise Service Operators (VAFCSO), said the proponents have yet to consult them.

Initially, Cokaliong said VAFCSO opposes the plan but their group would meet to discuss this concern. "We still considered (the planned closure) as mere rumor because we are not (officially) informed yet," Cokaliong said, in an interview.

Cokaliong said the channel's closure would delay the voyage by two to three hours, resulting in additional fuel costs.

Florentino Palacio, a member of VAFCSO and owner of FJP Shipping lines, admitted that terrorists could seize their vessels and ram it into the two bridges connecting Cebu mainland to Mactan Island.

However, Palacio said the organizers should look for other ways to prevent its occurrence.

If the closure of the channel is implemented, Palacio said, they would definitely pass on the additional fuel cost to the passengers.

"So, it's not only the shipping sector that will be affected but the riding public as well," Cokaliong said.

Cokaliong said the Coast Guard and Navy could use their patrol boats to guard the two bridges while the Maritime Police could deploy their men to the bridges.

According to Cokaliong, security has been tightened at the port terminals, which have X-ray machines to check the baggage.

But Coast Guard Central Eastern Visayas Commander Commodore Alejandro Flora said the Task Force on Maritime Security for Asean summit headed by the Philippine Navy made the proposal.

EU tuna inspectors liked what they saw

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—HEALTH AND safety inspectors from the European Union were impressed by the cleanliness and improvement they saw during a visit at the city fishing port complex and other tuna production chain, officials here said.

Mike Lamberte, General Santos City Fish Port manager, said he personally heard the positive comments made by the EU inspectors during the visit.

The EU inspection team, led by Dr. Luca Farina, arrived here Tuesday to inspect tuna production facilities and operations in the city.

The team visited the tuna processing sites, fishing vessels' berthing area, tuna unloading zone, freezers, laboratories and canneries.

The EU inspectors wanted to ensure compliance with the EU standards by the tuna producers and exporters here before further opening its door to the city's tuna products.

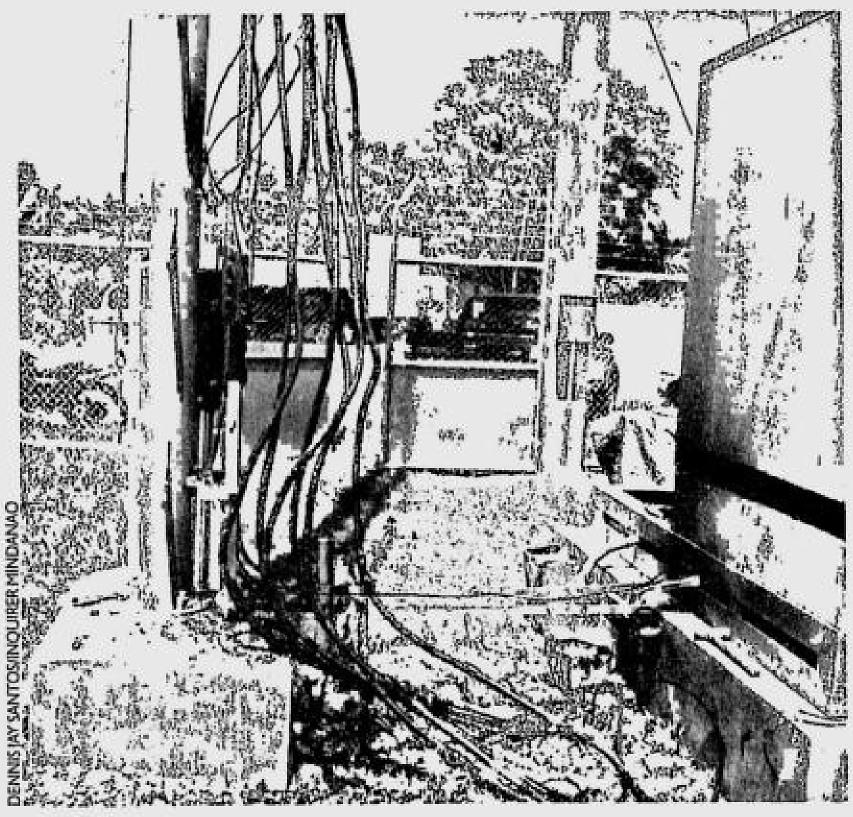
Lamberte was optimistic the fish port and other tuna production chains would be able to pass the scrutiny of EU regulatory and safety inspectors.

Mayor Pedro Acharon expressed similar optimism, saying he had seen the favorable reactions of EU inspectors.

"They commented favorably especially after seeing the improvement in physical infrastructure and good manufacturing practices inside the fish port complex and tuna canneries," Acharon said.

The result of the EU inspection is expected to come out next month.

The EU inspectors would submit their reports to the EU Commission for deliberation.
Aquiles Zonio, Inquirer Mindanao



DENNIS JAY SANTOS/INQUIRER MINDANAO

A CELLULAR phone firm's tower was among the latest targets of NPA attacks. This tower was in Panabo City, Davao del Norte.

NPA head justifies airport site attack

BACOLOD CITY—THE COMMUNIST PARTY of the Philippines-New People's Army in Negros Occidental justified the attack at the international airport project site in Silay City, saying the project caused the dislocation of farmers.

Frank Fernandez, a former priest who now heads the CPP-NPA in Negros, said that over a hundred hectares of agricultural land were destroyed to give way to the Silay airport project that in the process dislocated farm workers.

In a taped message sent to media outlets here Wednesday, Fernandez did not admit that the NPA was responsible for the Oct. 8 attack. He, however, insisted that the airport project was not a pro-people project as trumpeted by the government.

He maintained that the project only benefited foreign banks that funded it, foreign firms that implement them at exorbitant rates, local vested interests and government officials who benefit through commissions from them.

He said that if President Macapagal-Arroyo was sincere, she need not have spent P4 billion on a new airport since Negros Occidental already has an airport in Bacolod City.

The money, he added, could have been spent to directly alleviate the lives of workers, build classrooms, implement genuine land reform and pro-people industries.

Ben Solilapsi of Alab Katipunan, a people's group, however, said the Silay airport project was an opportunity for more investments that would result in job creation.

Solilapsi said Fernandez apparently only wanted to justify the NPA's very unpopular bombing of the Silay airport.

About 30 rebels involved in the attack blew up the two electronic control rooms of a cement batching plant of Korean firm Hanjin International, and the standby generator of the Takenaka Itochu Joint Venture System.

Security at the airport project has been tightened since the attack. *Carla P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

Needed: 1.5M trees for watershed

NORZAGARAY, BULACAN—AT LEAST 1.5 million trees are needed to reforest the Ipo Dam watershed, which timber poachers continue to destroy, endangering water supply in Metro Manila.

Rodrigo Abinsay, an official from the Manila Water Co. Inc., the water concessionaire for the east zone of Metro Manila that directly gets water from Ipo Dam, made this call during tree planting rites initiated by private firms and volunteers inside the Ipo Dam area in Barangay San Mateo here.

Anthony Gedang, president of private firm Water Konsult, led other volunteers and mountaineers in planting 5,000 narra and bamboo trees along the forest embankments and slopes in Sitio Puting Bato, one of the most denuded parts of Ipo Dam.

Mendel Garcia, chief of the Angat watershed reservation which houses the Angat Dam that brings down water to lower ground Ipo Dam, has asked civilian guards to help forest guards run after timber poachers and illegal loggers.

Speaking before a recent training workshop on tribal defense system, Garcia asked the Dumagat tribes to protect the forest from destruction by cooperating with the soldiers assigned to the area.

He said his forest guards seized recently seven chainsaws from timber poachers in the area. *Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Bulusan lahar forces villagers' flight

SORSOGON CITY—LAHAR DEPOSITS washed down from the slopes of Bulusan volcano due to heavy rains on Wednesday and Thursday destroyed at least 16 houses and forced the evacuation of at least 96 persons, said the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council here.

At least eight houses were destroyed and eight were damaged in Barangay Patag while a still undetermined number of houses were under threat in Barangay Cogon, said PDCC Action Officer Bobet Lee.

Lee said the lahar flow, which occurred at around 7 a.m. on Thursday, could have been more disastrous had it happened earlier when the residents were still asleep.

"Large boulders, some as big as trucks, went with the lahar," Lee added.

Lee said that four of the affected families, composed of 25 persons, were living near the banks of the Cogon River, which had been heavily silted by past lahar flows.

A bulletin from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) showed that from 9:30 a.m on Wednesday until yesterday morning, a muddy stream flow was observed in Barangays Cogon and Monbon, both in Irosin. *Bobby Labalan and Joanna Los Baños, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Sta.Rosa Laguna, Oct. 12
Imus Cavite, Oct. 13
Camanava, Oct. 14
Manila, Oct. 15
Lucena City, Quezon, Oct. 18
Naga City, Camarines Sur, Plaza Quezon, Oct. 20
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Adamson University sent 7 large boxes and bags of clothing; Honor Ignacio, 125 pcs cacha flour sacks; Helen Mendoza, 2 bags clothing and 2 boxes household items; Josie Saddul, 1 balikbayan box clothes and shoes; and Anonymous, 33 brand-new T-shirts.

The S.O.S. SORSOGON Volunteers are very grateful for the help extended to the Sorsogon victims. They wish to announce that they will continue to receive donations until November 15.

But the group will keep their benefactors informed on the efforts done by them and others in getting Sorsogon on its feet again.

The drop-off points for those who wish to donate food, clothing, household items and other goods are the Philam Homes Barangay Hall, West Ave., Quezon City, c/o Ophie Vytiaco- Diaz, 926-4102, and the Santuario de San Antonio Convent in Forbes Park.

Cash or checks may be deposited in any branch of the Bank of the Philippine Islands, Account No. 0011-1687-01. Please fax a copy of the donation deposit slip to 373-3484.

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MICHAEL G. MALAGHAN
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Session 2: Nov. 16, 2006
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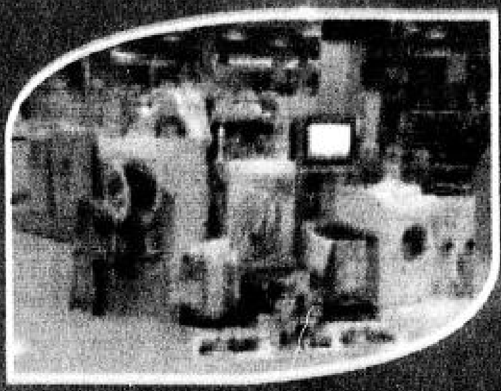
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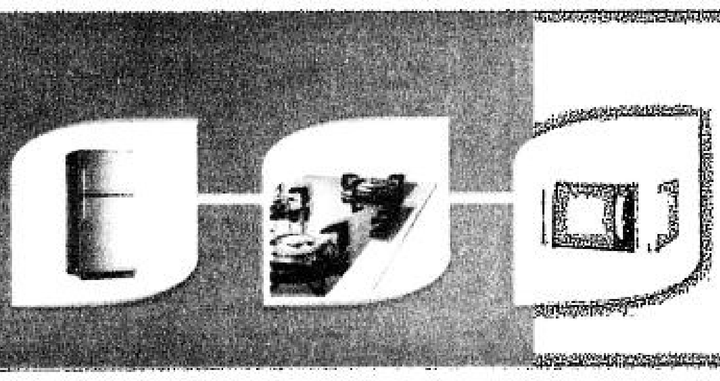

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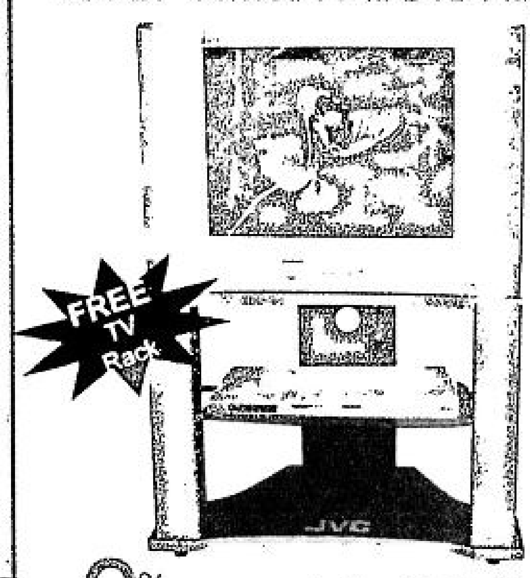

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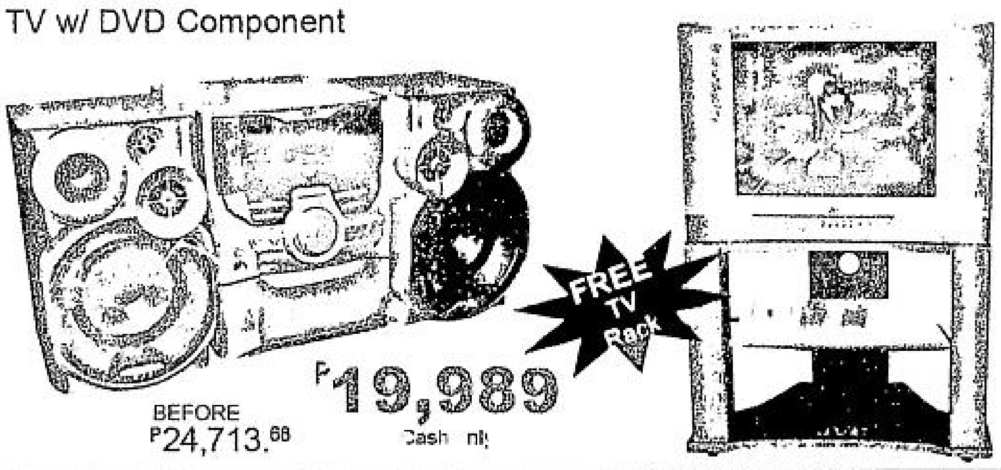

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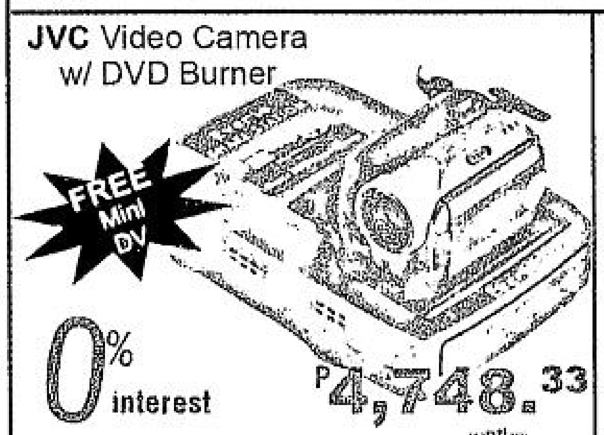

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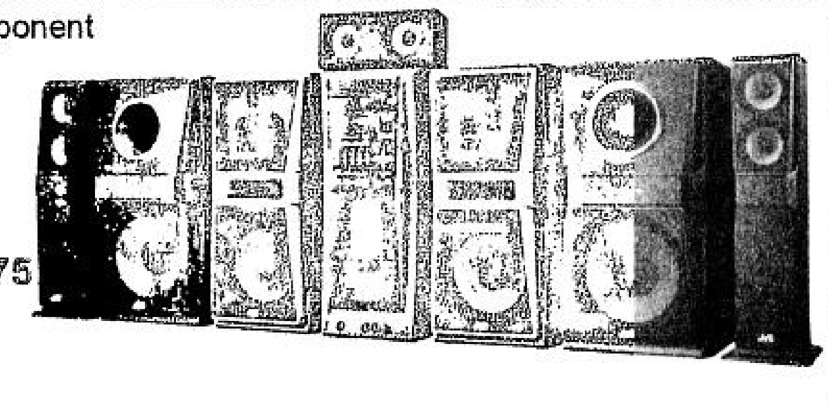

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MILF says Army attacked reb camp in Lanao Norte

COTABATO CITY—FRESH FIGHTING BROKE out between government security forces and Moro Islamic liberation Front (MILF) guerrillas in the hinterlands of Munai, Lanao del Norte where rebels maintain a camp, a ranking rebel official said yesterday.

Mohaqher Iqbal, MILF chief peace negotiator, said soldiers in a helicopter opened fire on MILF positions in Munai.

The rebels, he said, fought back.

There was no reported casualty from either side but Iqbal said it was another setback to efforts to revive peace talks between the government and the MILF that were stalled on territorial issues.

"This is a clear violation of our existing ceasefire agreement," said Iqbal.

Col. Eduardo Ducusin, commander of the 2nd Marine Brigade based in Iligan City, said the military indeed flew helicopters on Thursday.

Ducusin said Maj. Gen. Eugenio Cedo, commander of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), was aboard the other helicopter, which he used to visit soldiers.

But he said the soldiers never fired their guns.

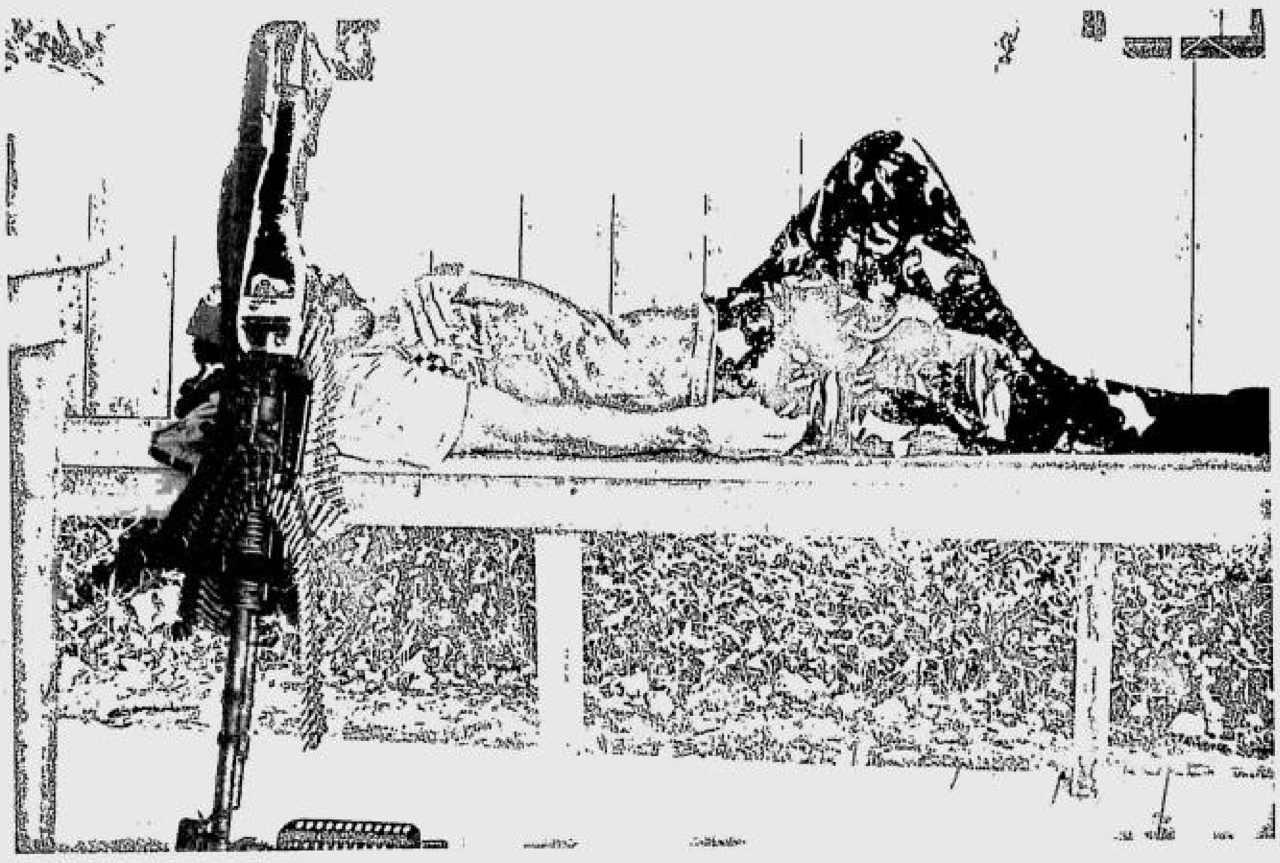
Iqbal said the MILF was filing a protest over the attack.

"It's a provocative action and we are protesting the attack," he said.

Iqbal described the peace process as having gone "from worse to worst."

Iqbal also accused the government of not being sincere in the peace talks, citing the inclusion of MILF chair Ebrahim Murad in the list of those charged for the October spate of bombings in Central Mindanao.

"This was a subsequent event that seemed to push us hard against the wall," he said. *Jeoffrey Maitem and Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*



A SOLDIER takes time out to take a nap in Maguindanao before setting out again to war against communist and Muslim guerrillas.

JEOFFREY MAITEM/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Aeta folk stop planned sealing off of venue for live fire war games

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—Aetas living and tilling farms near a range being used for live-fire training east of Mt. Pinatubo in Capas, Tarlac, have rebuffed the proposal of US and Philippine troops to completely seal off the area during the weeklong war games there.

Mayor Reynaldo Catacutan said the original plan was to ban the movement of villagers at the Crow Valley from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for safety reasons.

He said the militaries agreed to adjust, allowing the movement of Aetas from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3-4 p.m. to enable them to transport their crops to the center of Barangay Sta. Juliana.

Walking and driving in the area are prohibited outside of those schedules, the mayor said. "Block time" was how the Aetas have taken to calling the no-walking, no-driving time.

According to Catacutan, the Aetas asserted their access to the route because the "Talon Vision" exercises here were held at harvest time.

Barangay officials have been fielded to help cordon the area. There are at least 10 villages in the uplands of Sta. Juliana, also known as Crow Valley. The exercise range is within a 17,000-hectare military reservation managed by the Philippine Air Force.

Reached by phone, Nelson Pangilinan, tribal chieftain in Tarlac, said some Aetas have complained about the restrictions of movements but they nevertheless agreed because these were done to ensure their safety.

Catacutan said the military also regulated the scavenging of spent shells, permitting the Aetas to collect the junk only after the air and land marshals had signaled that the area was clear of risks.

The shells are sold by the kilogram to junk shops as it was when the US Air Force used the range from the 1960s until the 1991 pullout of troops. A number of Aetas got maimed, injured or killed while foraging, reports said.

The range has resumed its use since 1999 for training held under the Visiting Forces Agreement.

The Crow Valley leg of the Talon Vision began last Monday. For the live-fire training, US and Philippine Marines used "small arms, mortars, tactical vehicles, light armored vehicles, along with fixed and rotary wing aircraft for providing close air support," according to the training's public information office.

Catacutan said the troops held civic missions and gave $3,000 worth of school supplies and paints at Maruglo and Patling villages. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

TOOTS SOBERANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

A FILIPINO Marine fires 81 mm mortar tubes at the Crow Valley in Capas, Tarlac, site of live-fire training between US and Philippine soldiers. Officials supervising the military exercises wanted the site sealed off to Aetas who protested the plan.

Army says it killed NPA reb in Compostela clash

DAVAO CITY—SOLDIERS KILLED a New People's Army (NPA) rebel during a clash in Nabunturan, Compostela Valley yesterday morning, the military said.

Maj. Gen. Ernesto Boac, commander of the newly activated 10th Infantry Division, said Army soldiers from the 60th Infantry Battalion were patrolling Barangay San Isidro around 6 a.m. when they chanced upon a large group of rebels.

Boac said no casualty from the government side was reported.

The body of the slain rebel and an M-14 rifle were recovered after the gunfight, he said.

Boac said the clash was already expected as the military has stepped up its offensive against communist insurgents in the hinterlands of the region.

Boac said the Army also overrun two NPA camps in the province during the offensive.

He said the military was optimistic it could attain its goal of ending the communist insurgency soon.

In San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, a ranking military official said the Army has also "neutralized" at least three NPA guerrilla fronts in Caraga in a year.

Brig Gen. Ricardo David, outgoing commanding officer of the 402nd Army Brigade, identified the neutralized NPA fronts as Front Committee 8, Front Committee 4-A, and Front Committee 21-C.

David, who formally turned over command of the 402nd Infantry Brigade to Col. Dante Fernandez on Wednesday, admitted that 27 soldiers, including three officers, were also killed in the operations.

But he said the liberation of at least 75 villages from the influence of the NPA was worth it.

"These are tangible accomplishments by my men who worked very hard," David said in his farewell speech. *Dennis Jay Santos and Chris V. Panganiban, Inquirer Mindanao*

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SERIES OF 2006

TO : ALL CONCERNED OFFICIALS AND PERSONNEL OF THE DAR, LBP, DENR, LRA and BSP

SUBJECT : IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE AUTHENTICATION AND VERIFICATION OF CERTIFICATES OF TITLE FOR CARP COVERAGE IN THE PROVINCES OF NORTH COTABATO, SULTAN KUDARAT AND LANAO DEL NORTE

I. PREFATORY STATEMENT

Pursuant to the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC) Executive Committee Resolution No. 2003-91-02 and in order to further strengthen the operating procedures on and to ensure uniformity in the authentication and verification of certificates of title, these implementing rules and regulations (IRR) are hereby issued to achieve the following objectives:

1. To safeguard the interest of the Government;
2. To provide standard procedures in the implementation of various policies and completion of documentary requirements in the authentication/verification/ validation of certificates of title;
3. To serve as guidelines for CARP implementers for the Provinces of North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Lanao del Norte; and
4. To answer the basic information needs of stakeholders (i.e. landowners, agrarian reform beneficiaries [ARBs], as well as the general public) who are directly affected by CARP and in one way or another are concerned with its implementation.

II. COVERAGE

This IRR shall apply to all agricultural lands covered under PD 27/EO228 and EO 229/RA 6657 which are located in barangays in the Provinces of North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Lanao del Norte where fake or irregularly issued titles were found per Annex A. In cases where fake or irregularly issued titles are discovered in the barangays not listed in Annex A, all titles in such barangays shall automatically be covered by this IRR.

This however, does not preclude DAR, LBP, DENR and LRA from subjecting to coverage of this IRR any title covering a property in a barangay not covered by these guidelines if there exists any reasonable ground to doubt the authenticity and regularity of issuance of the said title. A written recommendation on the matter by any of the concerned field officials of DAR, LBP, DENR or LRA shall be forwarded to DAR Central Office-Bureau of Land Acquisition and Distribution (DARCO-BLAD) for appropriate action.

For titles outside of Annex A but located within the Provinces of North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Lanao del Norte, the duly certified ROD photocopies of all the preceding transfer certificates of title of the subject property, down to OCT, shall be attached to the claim folder. Further, the original owner's duplicate copy/ies (ODCs) of certificate of title duly stamped "FOR COVERAGE UNDER CARP" at the back of the title and signed by the Register of Deeds shall be required. The signature of the ROD shall be verified by the LBP AOC concerned upon receipt of the claim and the title.

III. PROCEDURES

1. The DAR Provincial Office (DARPO) in the Provinces of North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Lanao del Norte shall transmit to DARCO– BLAD two (2) sets (except Item 1.1 below) of the following:
    1.1. The original ODCs of certificates of title duly stamped "FOR COVERAGE UNDER CARP" at the back of the title and signed by the Register of Deeds (ROD). The signature of the ROD shall be verified by the LBP AOC concerned upon receipt of the claim folder and the title;
    1.2. Photocopy of the original copy of the title on file with the ROD of the subject landholding duly certified by the concerned ROD or his/her deputy;
    1.3. Duly certified ROD-photocopy of the original certificate of title and all the preceding transfer certificates of title down to the OCT of the subject property. In case of OCT/Patent issued in 1973 and succeeding years by the then DENR field officials concerned (DLO/PENRO/RED), a certification from the current DENR official concerned as to the existence of records of such OCT/Patent must be submitted. The name of patentee, patent application number, date of patent application and issuance, patent number, lot number, survey plan number, location, area, and other data relevant to the administrative grant/issuance of patent should tally with the data reflected in the title;
    1.4. Certification from the DENR Regional Office concerned that the subject property does not overlap with previously surveyed and approved, and patented property; and
    1.5. DENR Regional Office certified geographic position of the tie-point or reference point of the subject property, certified updated cadastral map or approved survey plan of the property, and certification as to the land classification and location of subject property, including the LC Map number and date thereof. In case where the approved survey plan is not available, the certified lot/technical description of the property shall be submitted.
2. The DARCO-BLAD shall, **for titles printed in May 1984 and succeeding years,** transmit the original ODC of title/s to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) for authentication as to print, paper and ink. The BSP shall submit a report of its findings to DARCO-BLAD, copy furnished the LBP Head Office, together with the original ODCs.
3. The DARCO-BLAD shall, **for titles printed prior to May 1984** and including all reconstituted titles/patents after fire (RTAF/RPAF) and titles after fire (TAF) regardless of the date of printing, refer the title including the documents enumerated in item III.1 hereof directly to the LRA which shall conduct the appropriate verification pursuant to the operational guidelines of the Task Force Titulong Malinis (TFTM) and submit the report of their findings thereof, to DARCO-BLAD together with the certification required under Item III.6.

    Simultaneously, the DARCO-BLAD shall forward photocopies of the same set of documents to DENR-LMB for verification. The latter shall submit the report of their findings to DARCO-BLAD, together with the certification required under Item III.7.
4. The DARCO-BLAD shall forward the documents enumerated in Item III.1 for all titles found to be authentic as to print, paper and ink by BSP to LRA, and simultaneously provide photocopies of the same set of documents to DENR-LMB for further verification.
5. The DARCO-BLAD shall forward the documents enumerated in Item III.1 to the DARCO-Bureau of Land Development (BLD) and the latter shall refer to the DENR-Secretary the titles which, upon projection, are found to be along the borderlines or boundary lines of forestlands/timberlands, national parks or similar inalienable lands of the public domain for re-verification and re-confirmation by the National Mapping and Resources Information Authority (NAMRIA) as to its land classification status. The NAMRIA shall issue the appropriate certification thereafter.
6. The LRA shall conduct the appropriate verification and issue certification based on its records pursuant to its internal rules and procedures on the matter, as follows:
    6.1 The existence of ordinary land registration case and cadastral proceedings for judicially issued titles. The lot number, location of the property, LRC/GLRO/LRA record number, case and decree number, date of issuance of decree, name of adjudicatee, cadastral case and cadastral record number and the area tally with the data as reflected in the title;
    6.2 The subject property does not overlap with other titled/decreed properties;
    6.3 For all OCTs, except those administratively issued, and for all TCTs, that the serial number on the judicial form was issued to and received by the ROD of the province/city where the property is located; and
    6.4 For titles printed in May 1984 and succeeding years, LRA shall issue a certification on its findings as to whether or not the titles were regularly issued.
7. The DENR-LMB shall verify/certify from its records the following:
    7.1 For administratively issued land patents/titles in 1972 and earlier, a certification as to the existence of records of the subject patent. The name of patentee, date of patent application and number, date of patent issuance, patent number, lot number, survey plan number, location, area, and other data relevant to the administrative grant/issuance of patent should tally with the data reflected in the title. In the absence of such records, the DENR-LMB shall issue the corresponding certification that no records exist thereat;
    7.2 The subject property, upon projection, does not overlap with previously surveyed and approved, and patented property; and
    7.3 That the judicial form bearing the serial number on the subject OCT/Patent was among those allocated/issued to and received by the PENRO/RED of the Province/Region where the property is located.
8. The DARCO-BLAD shall receive all the verification reports and titles from the agencies concerned and thereafter forward all verification reports and titles found to be authentic and regularly issued to the Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) for deliberation.
9. In case of Compulsory Acquisition or where the landowner is offering the property under VOS but the title is with the mortgagee-bank, the procedures above shall be followed except the submission of the ODC, the authentication of the title as to print, paper and ink by BSP or the authentication of the regularity of the issuance of the title by LRA. The DAR/LBP shall process the claimfolder/s as recommended by IAC subject to existing rules and regulations. Prior to actual withdrawal of the land transfer proceeds and as a requirement for payment, the landowner shall submit the original ODC to the LBP for further verification procedure. LBP shall forward the title to DARCO-BLAD which shall then subject the title for authentication as to print, paper and ink by BSP or verification as to the regularity of the issuance of said title by LRA. Landowners shall only be allowed to withdraw land transfer proceeds if the title is found to be authentic and regularly issued and upon submission of all payment requirements.
10. In all cases of suspected counterfeit/fake and/or irregularly issued titles, the DENR-LMB or LRA shall refer the matter to the DARCO-BLAD for appropriate action. For titles certified counterfeit by the BSP as to print, paper and ink, DARCO-BLAD shall refer the matter to the National Bureau of Investigation for appropriate action. The DARCO-BLAD shall furnish the LBP the list of counterfeit/fake titles and shall also inform the concerned PARO of the findings/result of authentication/verification who shall in turn properly advise the concerned landowner thereof.
11. The IAC shall validate the processes adopted in the evaluation of the title and recommend approval of the processing of the claim folder by LBP subject to DAR and LBP existing guidelines.

IV. PRIORITY IN THE PROCESSING/PAYMENT OF LAND TRANSFER CLAIMS (LTCs)

In order to ensure the orderly processing of LTC, the following priorities shall be observed:

1. LTCs which are ready for payment and/or LOs have already complied with/submitted the pre-payment requirements
2. LTCs under process at the Claims Processing, Valuation and Payment Division of the Agrarian Operation Center (AOC).
3. LTCs with the Field Investigation Division of the AOC.
4. LTCs for transmittal by DAR to LBP and those pending at the DAR-Provincial offices.

V. TRANSITORY PROVISION

Land titles with the Land Bank of the Philippines where authentication/verification are not yet completed and the corresponding claim folder is still with the DAR, shall be turned over to the DARCO-BLAD, together with all the required documents/reports and the same shall be likewise stamped "FOR COVERAGE UNDER CARP" at the back of the title and signed by the ROD concerned.

VI. REPEALING CLAUSE

This Memorandum Circular shall repeal, supersede and amend all orders and issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent herewith.

VII. EFFECTIVITY

This shall take effect ten (10) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation pursuant to Sec. 49 of R.A. No. 6657

Diliman, Quezon City, 27 September 2006.

NASSER C. PANGANDAMAN
OIC-Secretary, DAR
& Chairman, PARC Executive Committee

(PDI – Oct. 27, 2006)

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Oct. 27 - Nov. 9, 2006

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Kotex Fresh Longer & Wider Pantiliner (16's) P48.25 per pack

Pampers Comfort Eco-Medium (22's) P148 per pack

Kotex Fresh Unscented Pantiliners (20's) P35.75 per pack

Master Styling Gel Extreme (100ml) P43.50 per pc.

Pampers Comfort Eco-Large (20's) P149 per pack

Extra Checkered Cocktail Napkin 50 sheets (red & green) P16 per pack

Australia Harvest Instant Oats (1kg) Before P89.35 P78

Magnolia Full Cream Milk (400g) Before P111 P103

Lacto Pafi 1000ml Before P121.25 P115.25

La Bianca Peeled Chopped Tomatoes (400g) Before P30.50 P26.50

Green Cross Soap Shower Fresh (100g) Before P18.50 P16

Ambi Pur Green Tea (300ml) Before P115.75 P103.50

Nestlé 0% Fat Mango Yogurt Drink (250ml) Before P26 P24.75

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Oct. 27 - Nov. 9, 2006

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GMA concedes SC defeat, bows to rule of law

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"My view is the issue of a people's initiative has already become a closed casket that does not even deserve a visit on All Saints' Day," Santiago told the INQUIRER.

"It's as dead as a doornail. Its worshippers can bring candles and funeral wreaths, but these will not resurrect [it]," said Santiago, who in 1997 opposed in the high court a petition filed by the People's Initiative for Reform, Modernization and Action (Pirma), which was supposedly aimed at extending the term of then President Fidel Ramos.

The tribunal subsequently voted 10-5 in what is now known as Santiago v. Comelec (Commission on Elections), which centered on the lack of an enabling law to implement a people's initiative as a means of amending the Charter.

'Not trier of facts'

Nevertheless, Sigaw ng Bayan leader Raul Lambino decried the high court's labeling of the initiative as "a likely deception and gigantic fraud," saying the latter had no right to make that judgment because it was "not a trier of facts" and "should only decide on issues of laws and jurisdiction."

Lambino said this would be the main argument that Sigaw and its fellow Charter change proponent, the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap), would raise in the motion for reconsideration that they would soon lodge.

'Democracy in action'

In her Cavite speech, the President said, "[W]e call upon the people, especially the strong and committed supporters of the people's initiative, to join hands in supporting the close decision of the high court," she said. "This is democracy in action and we must uphold it."

Despite the tribunal's condemnation of the people's initiative, Ms Arroyo said its proponents were patriots: "I extol those who fought for the people's initiative for their patriotism, perseverance and courage."

"The great idea of Charter reform lives on, and we must keep the fire burning," she said, and reiterated that a modern Philippines could only happen through a new Constitution and a new system of government.

"We have a vision of having the Philippines join the ranks of First World nations by 2020, and a modern, more cohesive and more accountable political structure is key to achieving that goal," she said.

But she added that she would leave it to "the concerned institutions as to how we can keep the dreams of the people ascendant and heed the imperatives of change."

Over dzRH radio, when asked why she continued to push for Charter change, Ms Arroyo said there was a need to "fix the problem of our politics because this is weakening the economy."

Quoting from her State of the Nation Address in 2005, she said the Philippines had been split in two—one focused on work (as illustrated by an active stock market and the strong performance of the peso against the dollar) and one where the system of politics was preventing economic takeoff.

Santiago's forecast

Santiago, a constitutional law expert, aired her "fearless forecast" that the high court would not grant any motion for reconsideration.

She cited these grounds:

- The general rule in trial practice is that a court does not reconsider its decision unless substantial new evidence is presented to render the crux of the decision erroneous and inadequate.

"In other words, the cards are always stacked against [the one who seeks a reconsideration]. At the outset he already has a disadvantage," she said.

- The 8-7 vote showed that only one justice was needed to reverse the decision.

"However, because the voting was so close, the public will immediately condemn the somersaulting justice as a party to a quid pro quo with the administration. Whether that would be factual or not will not matter," she said, adding that the justice who would change his/her side on this case would be committing "professional suicide."

Santiago said this was the lesson learned by some justices who changed their vote in her 1997 case: "The public roundly booed [them] although in the end the original decision was upheld."

- The decision written by Associate Justice Antonio Carpio carried "extremely strong and condemnatory language."

"Usually, opinions are factual and narrative instead of opinionated and condemnatory. Hence, the justices who concurred with it will not be able to explain why they concurred with such a violently judgmental decision and then changed their minds at the last minute," Santiago said.

Close but firm decision

Former Senate President Jovito Salonga also doubts that the high court will reverse itself in the event that a motion for reconsideration is filed.

"It's a close but firm decision. I don't think there will be any substantial change in the way the justices voted," he told the INQUIRER, adding:

"They've studied the matter thoroughly. They discussed the issues every day. So when they voted, they already knew how to vote."

Salonga is a former professor of law with a master's degree from Harvard University and a doctorate from Yale University.

"This is a good day for the country," he said when the high court threw out the initiative petition on Wednesday.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines also praised the tribunal for its decision.

"Congratulations to the Supreme Court for standing free and independent despite external and expensive pressures," the CBCP president, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, said in a statement.

The CBCP also warned against plans to convene a constituent assembly: "Please pardon the term, but Charter change by Congress converted into a constituent assembly will have all the appearance of 'self-service' and *'lutong makao.'* We will pray against that."

If indeed Charter change is needed, along with a shift to the unilateral-parliamentary system, the CBÇP reiterated its recommendation for a constitutional convention "whose members shall be elected democratically."

Sweeping conclusion

But Sigaw's Lambino described the high court's declaration that the initiative proponents had "deceived the 6.3 million signatories and even the entire nation" as unfortunate and violative of the proponents' right to due process.

"It is a sweeping conclusion regarding a question of facts. That is not supposed to be what the Supreme Court is doing," he said.

Lambino wondered why the tribunal chose to question Sigaw-Ulap's compliance with constitutional requirements, when all they had sought was a review of its 1997 ruling on Santiago v. Comelec.

He said that ruling was the only obstacle preventing the Comelec from entertaining their petition.

Lambino also stressed that the signatures had been confirmed by the Comelec. He said it was "very clear" that 6.3 million people had signed the draft petition for the initiative.

A second argument that Sigaw may raise in its planned motion for reconsideration was the fact that the justices were closely divided in the vote, Lambino said. ***With reports from Jerome Aning, TJ Burgonio, Norman Bordadora and Christian V. Esguerra***

Legal battle not over

AFTER EXULTING OVER THE high court's vote on Wednesday, a cautious OneVoice yesterday said that the legal battle was not yet over.

"It's too early to say that the Supreme Court will uphold its decision," OneVoice convener and lead counsel Carlos Medina said in a press forum at the Senate.

"We know that the government, the Speaker [Jose de Venecia] and other politicians are talking to the justices. That's why this motion for reconsideration has to be closely monitored. It's possible that the pressure on justices will continue, and it's possible the [tribunal] will change its mind," said Medina, who had argued OneVoice's opposition to the initiative petition at the high court.

Medina further pointed out that if the resolution on the planned motion for reconsideration would drag until the retirement of Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban on Dec. 7, this could work in favor of Sigaw-Ulap.

He said he expected OneVoice to be given 10 days to comment on the motion, after which the high court would deliberate on the matter for at least two weeks.

Medina also predicted that the House-backed constituent assembly would face rough sailing.

He said Malacañang's allies in the House had to reconcile the versions of Representatives Constantino Jaraula and Prospero Pichay on this mode before anything else.

And even after they finally agree on one version, they have to contend next with their counterparts in the Senate, who maintain that any amendment made in a constituent assembly would need the Senate's concurrence, he said.

The inside story: Secret, swing votes of Panganiban, Santiago

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dissenting opinion.

Both are members of the University of the Philippines' College of Law Class of 1962, and rarely take contrary views on issues, the source said.

Cliff-hanger

The others who also voted to junk the petition were Associate Justice Antonio Carpio (the *ponente)*, and Associate Justices Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez, Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez, Conchita Carpio Morales, Romeo J. Callejo Sr. and Adolfo S. Azcuna.

Those who dissented along with Puno were Associate Justices Leonardo A. Quisumbing, Renato C. Corona, Dante C. Tinga, Minita V. Chico-Nazario, Cancio C. Garcia and Presbitero J. Velasco Jr.

With Santiago's vote, the count reached a cliff-hanging 7-7 by the time Panganiban was asked for his vote, the source said.

(In the high court, the most junior are asked to vote first, with the Chief Justice voting last. This protocol is to ensure that the Chief Justice's decision does not influence the junior associate justices.)

"So you could say that although Panganiban made the final swing vote, Santiago set the stage for it," the source said.

'Long hours of prayer'

Another justice who could also be considered to have made a swing vote was Azcuna, the source said.

Azcuna's original stand was to remand the petition to the Comelec, but "he changed his mind at the last minute," the source said.

Surprise

Another source, an employee of the high court, said the justices were surprised at Panganiban's vote in the light of the fact that he and Puno voted in 1997 (Santiago v. Comelec) for the adequacy of Republic Act No. 6735, the law on people's initiative.

"The Chief Justice seldom changes his decision in a particular issue," the source said, adding that what had made Panganiban change his position was the proponents' purported questionable manner of gathering the signatures and failure to fully impart to the people the proposed changes in the Constitution.

This source confirmed that Panganiban, Santiago and Azcuna had managed to keep their positions secret until voting day.

According to the source, it was Callejo, Carpio, Morales and Gutierrez who were vocal about their positions, with Callejo always raising the issue during the en banc sessions in the last two weeks.

"In all these discussions, the Chief Justice just listened, only speaking to say: 'Just relax, let's think things over,'" the source said.

The source also said the justices appreciated the fact that Panganiban had been "democratic" in allowing the justices to air dissenting views.

"Unlike his predecessors, he never tried to influence them to take his stand," the source said.

A day before the voting, Panganiban, Gutierrez, Garcia and Santiago retreated into "long hours of prayer" in their homes, the source said.

A GESTURE OF THANKSGIVING, a birthday cake from Cha-cha opponents for the ponente, Antonio Carpio, who wrote the majority decision, is inspected by the police. AFP

9-6 for petition

A day after the vote, Malacañang was still nursing bruised expectations of victory.

"We were expecting a 9-6 vote in favor of the people's initiative, based on our reports," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita in an interview with the INQUIRER.

"We still don't know what happened. There were some people we expected to vote [for the petition] but..." he said before trailing off.

Ermita maintained that Malacañang had not interfered in the high court's deliberations. But he said the decision served to again prove his belief: "It's hard to say something that is not final because things happen in between."

"Sapagka't lahat tayo'y tao lamang (We're all but human). Some people might have influenced them for their own reasons," he said.

Disappointment

In a separate interview with reporters, Ermita said he had yet to fathom why eight of the justices had thumbed down the petition.

"People have their own convictions over issues. It's hard to second-guess what the members of the Supreme Court are thinking at this time ... They have different opinions. That's the reason there are 15 justices. And you'll notice the vote was very close. They were exercising their own convictions," he said.

Ermita said that while President Macapagal-Arroyo was disappointed by the decision, she had not lost her resolve to push Charter change.

Appeal

"She would have voted differently because we all know she is pushing for constitutional reform. But the President is a political leader. She knows the elements that go into certain decisions. We have to respect the decision of the Supreme Court," he said.

Ermita said the administration remained optimistic on the plan to appeal the high court's decision and was also considering the two other modes for Charter change—constitutional assembly and constitutional convention.

He said the administration had up to Jan. 15 to get Charter change rolling in time for the May 2007 polls.

"The President supports any mode that would lead to Charter change. The important thing is the objective. We have to see the timetable involved and study how these moves would be in relation to the constitutionally scheduled elections," he said.

Asked to comment on the high court's declaration that the proponents had failed to comply with the basic constitutional requirements for conducting a people's initiative, Ermita said: "I have no idea, I had no hand in the deliberations."

But he made it clear that Malacañang was not blaming the proponents for the defeat in the tribunal.

"I don't think we can blame anybody on this, given the democratic exercise. The Supreme Court members have their own minds on this; it's a matter of interpretation. I'm sure they feel that they have done their part; their consciences are clear..." he said.

No surrender

And Malacañang is not about to throw in the towel, Ermita said.

"That's for the media to explain—how 6.3 million signatures can be ignored. I hope we [can] hear the more than 12 percent of overall voters—12 percent of 43 million is 5.1 million—how they feel about it," he said.

Petitioners used Charter provision sloppily, deceptively

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deception through the argument that the 6 million or so signatures constitute the voice of the people who are the ultimate sovereign.

The implication is that even if the signatures are constitutionally trash, they should be honored as the expression of the sovereign will.

'Constitution of Sovereignty'

The seven dissenting justices were careful to avoid saying that the people, right or wrong, should be followed. But running through most of the dissent opinions is the emphasis on the need to respect the sovereign will. Properly understood, the argument is impeccable.

It is good to remember, however, that a limit on popular sovereignty is found in Article XVII, which is aptly called the "Constitution of Sovereignty."

What Article XVII means is that it is the sovereign will of the people, manifested through the overwhelming ratification of the Constitution in 1987, that any change in the Constitution should be done within the framework of the Article XVII process.

What this also means is that Article XVII contains a statement of legal sovereignty. It has reference to the electorate or to that segment of the political community which can establish or alter the fundamental law.

By ratifying this provision in the 1987 Constitution, the people consented to limit their otherwise plenary sovereignty. This is the concept of sovereignty as autolimitation which, in the succinct language of Jellinek, "is the property of a state-force due to which it has the exclusive capacity of legal self-determination and self-restriction."

Respect for people's will

A sovereign then, if it chooses to, may restrain the exercise of what otherwise is unlimited competence. This is what Article XVII does, and it is the duty of the Supreme Court to ensure that the will of the people expressed in Article XVII is respected.

Of course, the sovereign people might choose to break out of this auto-limitation. This is what happens in a revolutionary situation in which the people choose to defy the constitutional restraints they imposed upon themselves through a Constitution.

This is not the situation today. The petitioners are not saying that they want to defy the Constitution. On the contrary, they are claiming that they are merely implementing the Constitution.

And since they clearly wish to follow the Constitution, it is the duty of the Supreme Court to tell them what following the Constitution means. This, the majority in the court has done in the Sigaw case.

Eight justices voted to dismiss the petition. Varied reasons were used—that Raul Lambino and his group [of Sigaw/Ulap] were not the proper parties to raise the issue, that Republic Act No. 6735 is not a sufficient law for enabling initiative and referendum, that the petitioners did not show to the people the entire revision they were advocating, that the proposal is a revision not proper for initiative and referendum, that the proposal violates the one-subject rule required by RA 6735, that the Commission on Elections did not abuse its discretion when it dismissed the Sigaw petition, that the 12-percent and 3-percent requirements were not proven to have been satisfied, and that with all these defects, there is no point in remanding the case to the Comelec.

'Totality approach'

The Lambino group for its part also offered various arguments for their dissent, namely, that the petitioners were the proper parties, that the issue is a political question which should be left to the people to decide, that RA 6735 is a valid law for enabling initiative and referendum, that what is being proposed is not a revision but a mere amendment, that the proposal does not violate the one-subject rule found in RA 6735, that the Comelec abused its discretion in dismissing the Sigaw/Ulap petition, that the Comelec should decide whether the 12-percent and 3-percent requirements have been satisfied, and that therefore the case should be remanded to the Comelec instead of being dismissed.

When all is said and done, the dispositive element is the majority vote to dismiss the petition. The eight justices in the majority had varied reasons and they did not all use the same arguments but they arrived at the conclusion that the case should be dismissed.

You might also call it something similar to the "totality approach" that the Supreme Court used in reaching a majority decision that Joseph Estrada had vacated the presidency permanently.

SPORTS

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STA LUCIA'S Alex Cabagnot (left) drives past Red Bull's Cyrus Baguio in their game Wednesday at the Araneta Coliseum. ERIK ARAZAS

Feisty Giants face Aces

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Red Bull vs. Welcoat
7:30 p.m.—Purefoods vs. Alaska

PUREFOODS WILL TRY TO EXTEND ITS winning streak to three games when the defending champion Chunkee Giants battle walking wounded Alaska today in the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

With their heels cooled, their lungs rested and their battered limbs getting a good day's rest after a classic triple overtime conquest of the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals on Wednesday, the Giants are installed as the solid picks to turn back the Aces in their 7:30 p.m. duel.

Alaska will again be without cornerstone Mike Cortez, the former top overall rookie pick who is reported to be out for the rest of the season because of a severe knee injury.

The Aces, reeling from two straight losses, will have to rely heavily on Willie Miller, the former MVP winner who is carrying most of the backcourt burden with Cortez in the sidelines.

Red Bull takes on newcomer Welcoat earlier at 4:45 p.m.

Purefoods battled from 20 points down to nose out Talk 'N Text, 109-103, getting 31 points in a record 61 minutes from Kerby Raymundo, 28 points from James Yap and a crucial basket and the defensive play of the game from Marc Pingris.

Compared with the Aces, the Giants are teeming with manpower and could encounter little trouble with Cortez gone and Alaska in dire need of another go-to-guy after the flamboyant Miller.

Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao would like to forget about Lordy Tugade completely and the game with the Dragons gives him that opportunity.

"Now that Lordy is gone, I am not going to look for anyone of them (the other players) to be like him," Guiao told the INQUIRER over the phone, when asked if the 85-103 defeat to Sta. Lucia had anything to do with the blockbuster trade two weeks ago that sent Tugade to San Miguel Beer.

"I don't think so," Guiao added. "It's just one of those games that we came out flat and with virtually no energy. We just did not do anything right and we played a team that did not do anything wrong."

Pundits were quick to point out that the Red Bull offense suffered immensely because Tugade was not around.

The firebrand mentor, however, was also quick in pointing out that his Bulls pinned a first loss on powerhouse Barangay Ginebra with the former National University ace in the UAAP riding the bench because of a bruised knee.

The 2-3 Dragons will also be coming off a loss and Welcoat has shown in its very short stint in the league that it cannot be taken lightly by any team. *Musong R. Castillo*

More sports stories on A31 to A36

Gin Kings overwhelm Tigers in Cabagan

By Musong R. Castillo

CABAGAN, ISABELA—BARANGAY GINEBRA rebounded from two straight defeats with a clinical dismantling of sister team Coca-Cola, 102-75, last night in a road game of the Talk 'N Text PBA Philippine Cup eliminations here.

The Gin Kings turned up the heat at the start of the second period and never looked back, racing to several 20-point plus leads on the way to picking up their first victory in three games and fourth in six outings overall.

For Coke, it was its second straight defeat in a 2-4 card, and the way the Tigers played last night recalled the way they opened up the tournament before finding good form to win two consecutive games.

The win at the Josefina T. Alonzo gym could be what the doctor ordered for Ginebra following its heart-rending overtime loss to San Miguel at the Cuneta Astrodome last Sunday.

"The players really wanted to come back from those two defeats," said San Miguel coach Jong Uichico. "We lost to two tough teams and that's why they really played hard and worked hard all game."

Ginebra grabbed a piece of second place with idle Talk 'N Text, just a win behind league-leading Sta. Lucia's 4-1 mark.

Relief wingman Sunday Salvacion led the Kings with 22 markers, but it was Mark Caguioa who did a lot of damage when the game was at its tightest.

Caguioa pumped in 11 points to boost the Gin Kings to a 48-35 lead at the break.

The game got truly ugly for Coke when it scored in trickles in the fourth period while Ginebra connected at will.

A 10-0 run that ended with 4:30 left gave the Kings a 99-69 lead.

Ginebra, which came into the game licking the wounds of losses to Red Bull and the Beermen, raced to leads of as many as 18 points in the third period before completely blowing the Tigers off the court in the fourth.

The Kings issued 27 assists against only 10 for Coke.

Joseph Yeo, the acrobatic rookie out of collegiate power La Salle, paced the Tigers with 16 points, with the returning John Arigo drilling in 15 in a losing cause.

Rudy Hatfield and the sharp-shooting Mark Macapagal chipped in 15 apiece for the Kings and all the 10 men that Uichico utilized contributed offensively.

The scores:

BARANGAY GINEBRA 102—Salvacion 22, Caguioa 20, Hatfield 15, Macapagal 15, Menk 10, Mamaril 6, Reavis 4, Abarrientos 4, Holper 2, Hubalde 1

COCA-COLA 75—Yeo 16, Arigo 15, Misolas 11, Peek 11, Miranda 9, Gavino 7, Salangsang 4, Ferreria 2, Pacana 0, Ramos 0.

Quarters: 18-19, 48-35, 73-62, 102-75.

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Water supply rationed starting Nov. 1

Angat Dam water drops to lowest level; El Niño blamed

By Blanche S. Rivera

AN IMPENDING WATER SHORTAGE has forced the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System to reduce the water supply for households and businesses in Metro Manila starting Nov. 1.

The cutback is one of the emergency measures to be undertaken by the MWSS as the water level in Angat Dam, which supplies over 70 percent of the water in Metro Manila and irrigation for Central Luzon, dropped to its lowest level this year. The dam should be building up its water level due to the rains, but the El Niño has caused the water level to remain around 192 meters, instead of the average 202 meters during the wet season.

The MWSS, National Water Resources Board (NWRB) and water concessionaires Maynilad and Manila Water have formed a water crisis team to address the problems that would be caused by the dropping water level in Angat Dam. NWRB director Ramon Alikpala said the MWSS has volunteered to cut back its water supply to Metro Manila by 2 cubic meters per second or from 41 cubic meters per second to 39 cubic meters per second.

He said that with this move, some areas in the metropolis may not get a 24-hour supply, but the MWSS has yet to submit a plan detailing which areas would be lacking water starting next week.

LAST STAND

Residents of Vizcarra Street in Pasay City set up a barricade to prevent the demolition of their shanties by city officials on Wednesday. The wrecking crew failed in its mission after homeowners put up a fight.

REM ZAMORA

Makati cops go high tech

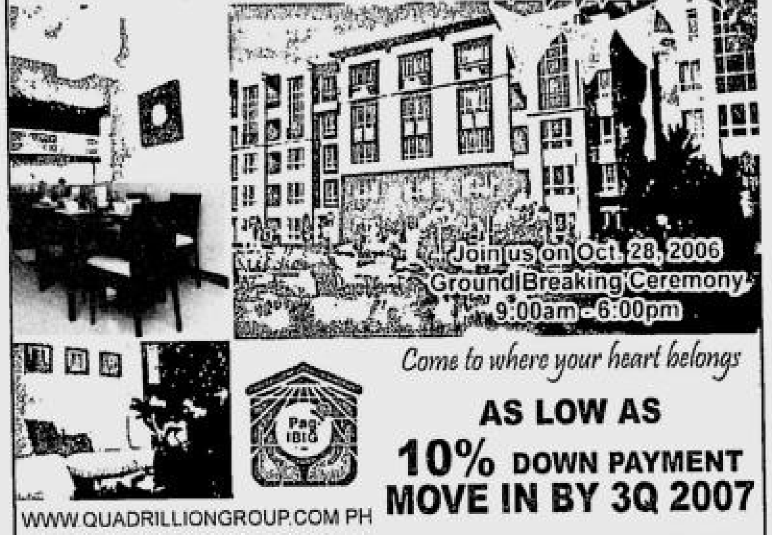
By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE MAKATI POLICE STATION IS HARNESSING new technology to improve communication lines among its various units involved in police operations and administration.

Now, with just a click of the mouse, the police chief can call a meeting or issue his latest directive to everyone under his command.

Dubbed "Police I-Chat," the project uses a computer software that allows the new police chief, Senior Supt. Gilbert Cruz, to send text messages for free to mobile phones of his precinct commanders and section chiefs via a personal computer.

"It is faster and easier. When I can't reach them through radio, I just log on to my computer and send them my directives," Cruz, a self-confessed techie, told the INQUIRER.



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MMDA asked to pay ₱2.5M for sheds' demolition

By DJ Yap

TWO MAINTAINERS OF WAITING sheds have asked a Quezon City court to stop the dismantling of their structures and its contents consisting of advertising materials.

High Desert Philippines Inc. and High Desert Stop-Overs Inc. filed the civil case to issue a restraining order against Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

The companies, which operate and maintain passenger stations, as well as the advertising panels and billboards on them are also seeking P2.5 million in damages from the MMDA.

The civil case, filed through lawyer Rita Linda Jimeno, stemmed from Fernando's order to dismantle advertisements on sheds operated by the companies.

The petition for temporary restraining order and the damage suit are being heard by Judge Henri Jean-Paul Inting of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 95.

In their 11-page complaint, the companies said they entered into agreements with MMDA and its predecessor, the Metro Manila Authority, to build, operate and maintain passenger stations, as well as install and maintain lighted advertising panels and billboards.

But Fernando, in a letter dated Aug. 8, said the agreements were being terminated. He ordered the removal of the waiting sheds and ads on or before Sept. 16, the complaint alleged.

The companies said they told Fernando they had invested millions of pesos in 250 waiting sheds in Metro Manila. They said the sheds were made for the use and protection of commuters and were "not hazardous and do not pose dangers to anyone."

Fernando, however, allegedly went directly to advertisers and ordered them to dismantle the billboards.

In a Sept. 13 meeting, representatives of the companies offered an amicable solution to the problem. Fernando reportedly agreed that "the demolition would be deferred indefinitely" until a settlement was reached.

But MMDA demolished about 16 waiting sheds from Oct. 13 to 18 without notice, the companies alleged. They had to demolish four of their own waiting sheds to recover advertising materials and minimize their losses, the companies added.

With each shed costing P50,000, the complainants said they lost P1 million from the demolition. They also cited Fernando's public announcement to demolish all their waiting sheds and to construct "his own" structures.

17 Eid'l Fitr celebrators sick after eating packed food

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE CELEBRATION MARKING the end of the fasting month of Ramadan Tuesday ended on a sour note for at least 17 persons in Taguig City who suffered upset stomachs after eating packed meals.

The City Health Office said the residents of Barangay Maharlika complained of stomach ache and diarrhea after eating meals prepared to mark Eid'l Fitr.

Mayor Freddie Tinga directed Dr. Rolando Paac, city health officer, to verify reports that 100 people were downed by contaminated food and to extend assistance to the victims.

After an investigation, Paac said only 17 people were affected. He said there was no more food left for the health office to examine and verify the contamination.

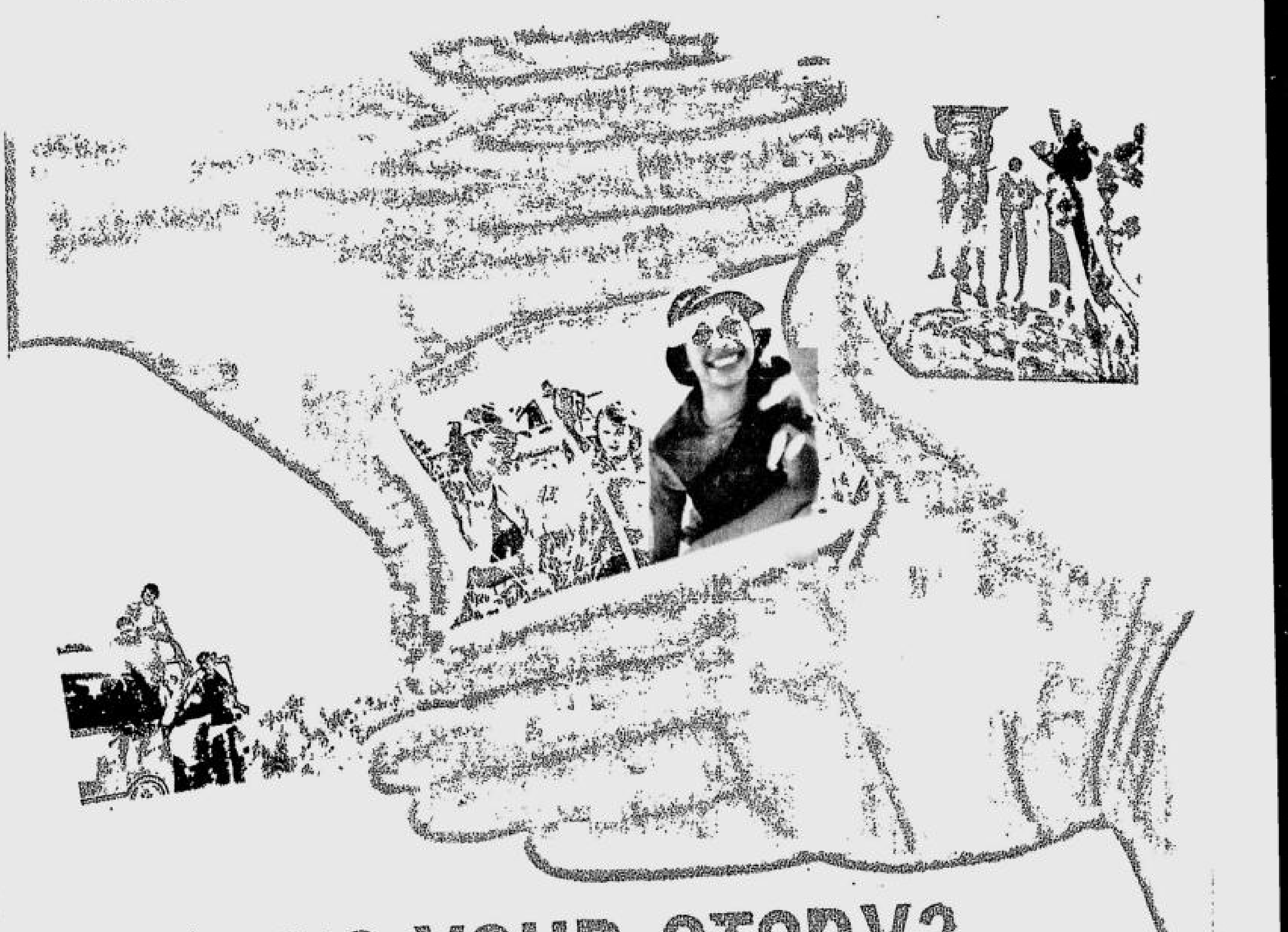
According to village leaders and residents, the Office of Muslim Affairs distributed some 5,000 food packs in the barangay at around 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

Each pack contained rice, vegetables, fried *bangus* (fish) and chicken.

At a housing unit called the Barracks, where some 200 food packs were distributed, eight people were reported to have experienced stomach ache.

Six persons living at the Condo Housing, where 500 meals were given out, complained of diarrhea.

Three persons went to the barangay hall to report they had stomach ache, had dizzy spells and vomited a few hours after eating the food.



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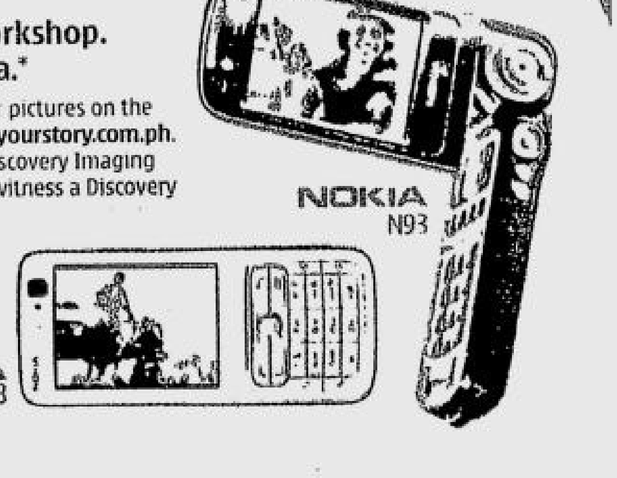

Palace asks CA to lift TRO issued to Binay

By Armand N. Nocum

MALACAÑANG ASKED THE COURT of Appeals (CA) yesterday to lift immediately the 60-day temporary restraining order issued to Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay who was suspended for allegedly hiring "ghost employees."

In a 45-page comment, the Office of the Solicitor General said the Palace said government bodies with "the power of removal or suspension should be the sole judge of the necessity and sufficiency of the cause (for action)."

Public policy

"Unless a flagrant abuse of the exercise of that power is shown, public policy and a becoming regard for the principle of separation of powers demand that the action of said office or body should be left undisturbed," said Solicitor General Antonio Nachura.

Preventive

The OSG said the the suspension order handed down on Oct. 18 was meant to prevent Binay from influencing possible witnesses and hide evidence.

"Should (Binay) continue to wield the powers of his office as mayor, he could influence witnesses and destroy the integrity of records and other evidence," the OSG added.

"In fact, there is a great probability that he (Binay) would do so consistent with human nature as a measure of self-measure," it added.

Separation of powers

"No abuse was committed by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita in issuing the assailed preventive suspension order against petitioner (Binay). Accordingly, the issuance of the temporary restraining order enjoining the implementation of said preventive suspension order desecrates a basic stitch in our constitutional framework—'the separation of powers principle,'" the OSG said.

The INQUIRER tried to reach the office of the Makati mayor for comment, but was told that he was out.

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October 29, 2006
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Pranksters who send bomb scare tips not off the hook

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

INCORRIGIBLE PRANKSTERS WHO PERSIST in making threat calls or send text or e-mail messages with a similar content should be more careful next time.

Police officials are reminding these people of a 26-year-old presidential decree penalizing the dissemination of false bomb threats.

As proof that it was not taking the matter lightly, the Eastern Police District is scheduled to file charges today against a woman believed to be the source of an e-mail which circulated last week warning of an alleged bomb plot involving a big mall in Mandaluyong City.

Officials of the mall, who claimed they lost about 50 percent of their regular customers for several days because of the barrage of e-mail and text messages, are also expected to file charges against the woman.

The messages said police arrested an alleged member of the bandit group Abu Sayyaf who had confessed to them a plot to bomb the mall last Saturday.

The Philippine National Police had quickly dismissed the e-mails and text messages as false information, but it was enough to alarm officials and mall-goers.

Last Saturday passed without any untoward incident, although owners of businesses in the mall and public utility vehicle drivers complained there were fewer customers that day.

The messages also forced the mall to hire additional security guards. Other malls also deployed bomb-sniffing dogs at their entrances.

Police managed to track down the woman, who worked for the a computer firm in Makati City, through her e-mail signature which appeared in all of the forwarded messages. She allegedly first sent an e-mail containing the alleged threat on Oct. 10; a second e-mail was forwarded on Oct. 16.

Investigators, however, have failed to talk to the woman who reportedly filed an indefinite leave of absence two days after sending her second message when she started to receive numerous calls about her e-mail.

District director Chief Supt. Luizo Ticman earlier told the INQUIRER the woman could be held "criminally liable" depending on her motives. "The e-mail had no factual basis. We want to know what was the motive behind the information. Was it just a prank or something else?" he added.

Former President Ferdinand Marcos had signed Presidential Decree 1727 on Oct. 18, 1980 which declared "unlawful the malicious dissemination of false information or the willful making of any threat concerning bomb, explosives or any similar device or means of destruction and imposing penalties thereof." The decree said violators could face a jail term of not more than five years, or a fine of not more than P40,000, or both depending on the discretion of the court.

Investigators at the District Criminal Investigation Unit said this was the first time in recent years they would file charges citing the presidential decree. "We had similar cases before but we did not know there was a specific law like this," a police investigator said.

BBQ NG BAYAN COOK FEST
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Saturday,
October 28, 2006, 5 pm
Rajah Sulayman Park

Here's how you can join:

1. For only **P70**, any person can buy a coupon for the **BBQ ng Bayan Cook Fest** at any Aristocrat branch from October 18 to October 28, 2006.

2. The coupon serves as entry ticket to the BBQ ng Bayan Cook Fest, to be held on **October 28, 2006, 5 p.m. at the Rajah Sulayman Park** (across Aristocrat Roxas Boulevard branch).

3. The coupon also entitles the bearer to one (1) BBQ ng Bayan Kit. The kit includes:
   - -1 stick pork BBQ
   - -1 stick chicken BBQ
   - -1 drink
   - -rice
   - -1 sachet java sauce
   - -1 sachet atchara
   - -dessert

4. During the BBQ ng Bayan Cook Fest, the coupon holder gets the privilege to grill the BBQ his/her own way. Drinks and rice will be provided for free.

5. Live bands and various kinds of entertainment await the guests at the BBQ ng Bayan Cook Fest. Fun suprises are in store for the kids and the kids-at-heart. It's gonna be a party the whole family will truly enjoy.

Hurry! Get your coupons now. We want you to be a part of our celebration, in the same way you made The Aristocrat Restaurant a part of your family tradition for the past 70 years!

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METROBRIEFS

Billboard stays ... for now

A QUEZON City court yesterday junked a motion seeking the dismissal of the case against the Department of Public Works and Highways filed by an advertising firm, which is seeking an injunction to block the agency from tearing down one of its billboards. Judge Ralph Lee of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 83 denied the motion to dismiss filed by DPWH Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane and two other officials against DDBS Advertising Unlimited. DDBS is seeking a preliminary injunction to block the DPWH from dismantling its billboard beside the GMA-Kamuning Station of the Metro Rail Transit. Earlier, Lee issued a 20-day temporary restraining order blocking the DPWH from destroying the 80-by-60-foot billboard. The DPWH sought the dismissal of the case, saying that the petitioner had no authority to build the structure standing on property owned by the government-run Social Security System. But the court said there was sufficient cause of action in the case. DDBS said it leased the property from the SSS since 2002, and is still paying monthly rental fees.

DJ Yap

Manila cemeteries safe

THE MANILA government yesterday assured the public that safety measures are now in place in the city's public cemeteries. Mayor Lito Atienza said police personnel from the district's police force will be augmented by elements of the Manila Traffic and Peacekeeping Action Team and the City Security Force in implementing security measures and enforcing restrictions in the city's cemeteries. There are four cemeteries located in the city, namely North Cemetery, South Cemetery, La Loma Cemetery and Chinese Cemetery. Atienza has directed the Manila Police District to implement a security and crowd control system—including security checks at the entrances of the cemeteries. Except for security and emergency medical service vehicles, all vehicles shall not be allowed inside the cemeteries starting midnight of Oct. 30.

Tina G. Santos

'Ubos Peste' in Navotas

NAVOTAS Mayor Toby Tiangco has launched "Ubos Peste," an intensified campaign to fight the spread of dengue virus and other diseases in the town. Dr. Hector David, the municipal health officer who heads the campaign, said the drive includes a competition open to residents who can collect the most number of pests (mosquitos, flies, cockroaches and rats). Cash prizes of P3,000 (1st prize), P2,000 (second), and P1,000 (third) will be awarded to the winners who will be awarded after the flag ceremony rites at the town hall grounds on Monday.

Housing Fair 2006

Serbisyo Publiko na Tapat:
Abot-Kayang Pabahay ang Katapat

60,000 Homes for Government Workers in One Big Event

The biggest housing fair in the country opens today at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati and the Ayala Center in Cebu, with President Gloria Macapagal -Arroyo and Vice President Noli De Castro leading the opening ceremonies in Makati. The event gives low-income government workers a unique opportunity to buy their own home. It's just the latest in the housing sector's innovative answers to the country's shelter problem.

"Serbisyo publiko na tapat, abot-kayang pabahay ang katapat."

That is the theme of Housing Fair 2006 to be held simultaneously in two venues on October 27 and 28. If the onslaught of inquiries regarding the Fair is any indication, then we can expect the country's public servants to be trooping en masse to the Glorietta Activity Center, Makati and Ayala Center, Cebu to look for an affordable home they can buy in the biggest sale of foreclosed properties by government corporations and financial constitutions.

The Housing Fair, which is the culmination of the celebration of the National Shelter Month, is the brainchild of the country's housing czar, Vice President Noli "Kabayan" de Castro.

"This is the housing sector's version of the bargain bazaar and the midnight madness sale," the Vice President said.

The idea, De Castro says, comes from the confluence of two factors that he happens to be familiar with: government agencies with plenty of non-performing assets, and employees who can't afford the more expensive houses available in the market.

"I know that the shelter agencies under the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) have large inventories of foreclosed housing units, specifically the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) and the Pag-IBIG Fund. We also observed this among some government financial institutions (GFIs). They have properties that are being disposed through a bulk or fire sale scheme" De Castro noted.

On the other hand, he has been approached many times by government employees who are looking for affordable housing they can avail of.

"Many of them are teachers, soldiers and rank-and-file employees of government agencies who do not have the paying capacity to access regular loans even from GFIs that offer housing loans," he said.

He proposed that the non-performing assets instead be offered to these government employees at low interest rates and longer amortization period.

"This way, we can address the housing needs of low income public servants while at the same time pursue the disposition of non-performing assets. These properties can be offered at low prices on an as-is where-is basis, so why not offer them to our hardworking government workers?" he said.

The idea took the form of a concrete program to be launched as the Housing Fair 2006. Aside from the NHMFC, HGC and Pag-IBIG Fund, other GFIs jumped at the chance of joining the Vice President's innovative program. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Land Bank of the Philippines, Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation, GSIS and SSS added their own inventories of foreclosed properties to the sale. Together, the shelter agencies and GFI's made up a long list of over 60,000 housing units in different parts of the country.

The Housing Fair is open to all government employees including personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, Bureau of Fire Protection, elective officials and employees of local government units.

"The units are offered at interest rates of as low as 6% per annum, and the repayment period may be as long as 30 years, depending on the agency or institution. Buyers may also avail of discounts on the selling price," the Vice President said. The monthly amortization shall be paid through salary deduction. Payment in cash or Post Dated Checks may be allowed by the concerned agencies.

Each participating agency or GFI has its own set of terms and conditions for the sale of properties in its inventory. Interested buyers have to be evaluated by the seller agency to determine their eligibility for cash or loan availment. Buyers may only acquire one foreclosed property for the duration of the program, but they may be allowed to buy two adjacent units. The HUDCC will create a Central Monitoring Agency to keep track of completed sales on a daily basis.

Prospective buyers may already fill out a Reservation Form at the Housing Fair if they find a property that they want to purchase. A reservation fee of P5,000 is required, except for Pag-IBIG and SSS, which require a 10% downpayment. The reservation fee may be refunded if the buyer decides not to continue the purchase, or if the selling agency finds the buyer ineligible.

The sale of properties itself does not end with the two-day Housing Fair. Those who missed the event will still have the chance to avail of the housing units being offered until April 2007.

While government employees are the first priority in this program, private employees may also avail of acquired properties of the SSS and Pag-IBIG Fund, provided that they are members.

Aside from the sale of acquired assets, the Housing Fair will also showcase brand new housing units being offered by various private developers in their respective projects. There will also be an exhibit of the latest cost-effective housing and construction technologies in the market.

The Vice President said that this Housing Fair "will give the people various options depending on their preference and capacity to pay. There's something for everyone in this event—we're allowing them to make choices"

"I hope that by the end of the six month implementation period, we will have transformed more Filipinos into actual homebuyers through this housing fair," he said.

The complete list of foreclosed properties on sale is available at www.housingfair.com.ph. For more information, interested parties may call 811-4122, 811-4167, and 0917-8822633. Interested buyers can also inquire via SMS or text. Just text: housing (space) fair (space) search (space) <area or agency> and send to 2383 for Globe, 2389 for Sun Cellular or 228 for Smart and Talk 'n Text.

Messages

Warmest greetings and congratulations to the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council for organizing the Housing Fair 2006 - the biggest event of its kind in the country to date - in partnership with the key shelter agencies, government financial institutions and private real estate organizations.

This major event, to be held successively in Davao, Metro Manila and Cebu, is a very timely undertaking that will spread the good news about housing in the country today - that the average Filipino worker can now have a house of his own, thanks to the efforts of the government housing sector in revitalizingthe housing program.

I especially laud the idea of offering the acquired residential properties of all participating agencies and financial institutions to employees from the public sector, at low interest rates and longer payment periods. I enjoin the government workers to take advantage of this unique opportunity to fulfill your dream of owning a home.

A main objective of the National Shelter Program is for government to explore all venues to make housing more accessible to all Filipinos. This Housing Fair highlights all our previous efforts, and heralds better things to come for the shelter sector in particular, and for the nation as a whole.

Mabuhay!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

I am inviting all the hardworking Filipinos, especially our government employees, to attend the Housing Fair organized by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), to be held on October 27-28 at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati and the Ayala Center in Cebu City.

This will be the biggest nationwide housing fair in the country to date, with 60,000 residential units available from the government alone. The shelter agencies and government financial institutions will be offering their acquired assets at low interest rates and longer payment periods, primarily to government employees. We know that many of you are counted among those that still do not own a house, given your meager salaries. This is a form of non-wage benefit to reward you for your hard work and faithful service to the public.

Our private developer partners will also be exhibiting their own affordable housing projects that are available through the financing programs of our GFIs. This will be a good opportunity to look for your dream home in one place, where you can also learn about affordable housing loan packages with some of the lowest interest rates in the market today.

This is the best time to buy a home for your family, and the government continues to open doors to make it easier for you.

Magkita-kita po tayo sa Housing Fair. Mabuhay!

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO
HUDCC Chairman

Schedule of Events

October 27 - 28, 2006
Glorietta Activity Center, Makati City
and Ayala Center, Cebu City

DAY 1 (October 27, 2006)

I. Arrival of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
II. Ceremonial Opening of Exhibit Door
- President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli De Castro *(to be assisted by heads of key shelter agencies and GFIs)*

III. Ugnayan Pabahay Para sa Bayan
- President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli De Castro *with KSA heads and GFI officials*

IV. Tour of Exhibit booths
- Vice President Noli De Castro with KSA heads and GFI officials

V. Computer Hub Demo / Website briefing
- Vice President Noli De Castro

VI. Raffle Draws

DAY 2 (October 28, 2006)

I. Raffle Draws
II. Entertainment Numbers
- Danz Focus; Wally and Ruby of Eat Bulaga; Silk Band

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HUDCC

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For more information contact:
811-4167, 811-4198 and 0917-8822633
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www.housingfair.com.ph

Putin says he will not seek another term

MOSCOW—PRESIDENT VLAdimir V. Putin, who is still popular in Russia after six years in office, said Wednesday that he would continue to "influence life in our country" after his second term is up in 2008, but that he would not run for president again.

Putin said he would step down "even though I like my work." Although a third consecutive term is forbidden under Russia's 1993 constitution, his supporters have called for a referendum to do away with that ban.

Though there is much speculation about his future, Putin did not elaborate during a televised question-and-answer session for Russian citizens.

The town-hall-style show has become an annual tradition in Russian politics under Putin, at a time when many forms of political expression are no longer possible. He said he uses the call-in to respond directly to voters.

Operators screened roughly a million calls, e-mail messages and cell phone text messages and passed a few dozen to Putin to answer during the nearly three-hour program.

Most were bread-and-butter domestic issues, like teachers' and doctors' salaries. But he also weighed in on the sexual-assault charges facing Israeli's president and chided North Korea for testing a nuclear device near Russia's border.

Early on in the program, Arkady Kokayev, a truck driver from the steppe town of Podgornaya-Pokrovka, asked Putin, "What will happen to us and this country after you leave?"

"Arkady, I think everything will be all right," Putin said, striking a folksy tone.

"As for myself, as I have said, the constitution—even though I like my work—the constitution does not give me the right to stand for a third consecutive term," Putin said.

He went on to say: "I shall be able to retain the most important thing that a man in politics should value: your confidence. And using it, you and I, we shall be able to influence the life in our country."

It was a strong hint that Putin, who has quashed most dissent here, would remain in politics in some fashion after 2008. Analysts say Putin has several options, including assuming the leadership of the party he founded, United Russia, becoming speaker of parliament or the chairman of Gazprom.

Putin demonstrated his trademark command of details and numbers. He said Russia's economy was growing at a fast clip—6.6 percent so far this year—but that it has failed to diversify away from dependence on oil and gas. *New York Times News Service*

PUTIN on TV in Moscow, Oct. 25. AP

Bush tries to ease public concerns on Iraq

WASHINGTON—FACING PUBLIC dismay over the war in Iraq, President Bush on Wednesday somberly acknowledged the broad scope of US setbacks and missteps there. But he urged Americans to look beyond the violence on their television screens and avoid disillusionment over a war he said was still winnable.

Bush's comments, in a news conference at the White House, were a stark indication of concern within the West Wing over eroding support for the war. The violence in Iraq has reached near-record peaks just as voters are considering their final choices for congressional elections, a contest that Bush has cast in part as a national referendum on the conflict.

With a new emphasis on tactical flexibility, Bush seemed intent on aligning himself and his party more closely with the national mood. And while most Republican candidates have sought to turn voters' attention away from the war, Bush chose to address the issue head-on.

"I know many Americans are not satisfied with the situation in Iraq; I'm not satisfied, either," Bush said. "That is why we're taking new steps to help secure Baghdad, and constantly adjusting our tactics across the country to meet the changing threat."

Bush expressed general support for Prime Minister Nouri Kamal al-Maliki of Iraq, even as al-Maliki used his own news conference to distance himself from the United States. Speaking in Baghdad, al-Maliki said he had not endorsed an American notion of a time line for stabilizing Iraq. Al-Maliki's comments contradicted the message given Tuesday by top US officials in Baghdad, who said that the Iraqis had embraced a timetable. *NYT*

WORLDBRIEFS

S. Korea says North has 50 kg of plutonium

SEOUL, South Korea—North Korea is believed to have extracted up to 50 kilograms of plutonium that can build as many as seven nuclear weapons, according to a South Korean Defense Ministry report released by a lawmaker Thursday. The communist nation is also working to make a small and lightweight nuclear warhead that can be mounted atop a ballistic missile, said the ministry, according to an internal assessment released by Song Young-sun, a lawmaker from the main opposition Grand National Party. Currently, the North is believed to have built a nuclear warhead weighing some two to three tons, said the ministry. To be mounted on a missile, the warhead would need to be less than one ton, the ministry said. The North can also drop nuclear bombs with its Russian-made bombers, said the ministry, adding that the North has 82 Il-28 bombers at bases in Uiju and Jangjin. The North stunned the world in 1998 by firing a long-range ballistic missile over Japan into the Pacific Ocean and it also test-fired seven missiles in July, including a long-range missile believed capable of reaching the US that crashed shortly after launch. *AP*

N. Jersey court backs rights for gay unions

THE STATE Supreme Court in New Jersey said Wednesday that same-sex couples are entitled to "the same rights and benefits enjoyed by opposite-sex couples under the civil marriage statutes." But the court, in its 4-3 ruling, said that whether that status should be called marriage, or something else, "is a matter left to the democratic process." The court's eagerly awaited decision found that an arrangement akin to that in Vermont, which authorizes civil unions between same-sex couples but does not call them marriages, would satisfy the New Jersey constitution's guarantee of equal protection under the law. *NYT*

Dozens die in Russia alcohol poisoning

MOSCOW—A Russian region has imposed a state of emergency after more than 400 people were taken to hospital and 15 died as a result of drinking tainted alcohol, Russian television reported on Thursday. The state of emergency was declared in the Pskov region, about 700 km west of Moscow, but other regions across the country also reported mass outbreaks of alcohol poisoning with dozens of deaths. Public health officials who seized alcohol on sale in the Pskov region found it contained substances usually used in medicines, Channel One television said. The substances react dangerously when mixed with alcohol, it said. The first cases of alcohol poisoning were reported three weeks ago. Many of the people who needed medical help are suffering from liver problems. *Reuters*

German troops pose with human skull

BERLIN—Chancellor Angela Merkel on Wednesday promised tough action after German soldiers in Afghanistan were photographed playing and posing with a human skull. "The chancellor has made it clear that she finds these pictures shocking and disgusting," government spokesperson Thomas Steg said, adding that Merkel wanted the troops responsible to face "strict measures." Germany's top-selling newspaper Bild on Wednesday printed the photographs of four German soldiers from the Nato-led International Security Assistance Force displaying a skull like scalp hunters. The defense ministry said it had launched an internal investigation and was questioning two men, while Defense Minister Franz Josef Jung threatened to throw the culprits out of the army. *AFP*

Argentina charges Iran, Hezbollah in '94 bombing

BUENOS AIRES—ARGENTINE prosecutors charged Iran and the Shiite militia Hezbollah Wednesday with the 1994 bombing of a Jewish charities office in Argentina that killed 85 people and injured 300.

Prosecutors demanded an international arrest warrant for then-Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and six other top Iranian officials at the time of the attack, and a former Hezbollah foreign security service chief, Imad Fayez Moughnieh.

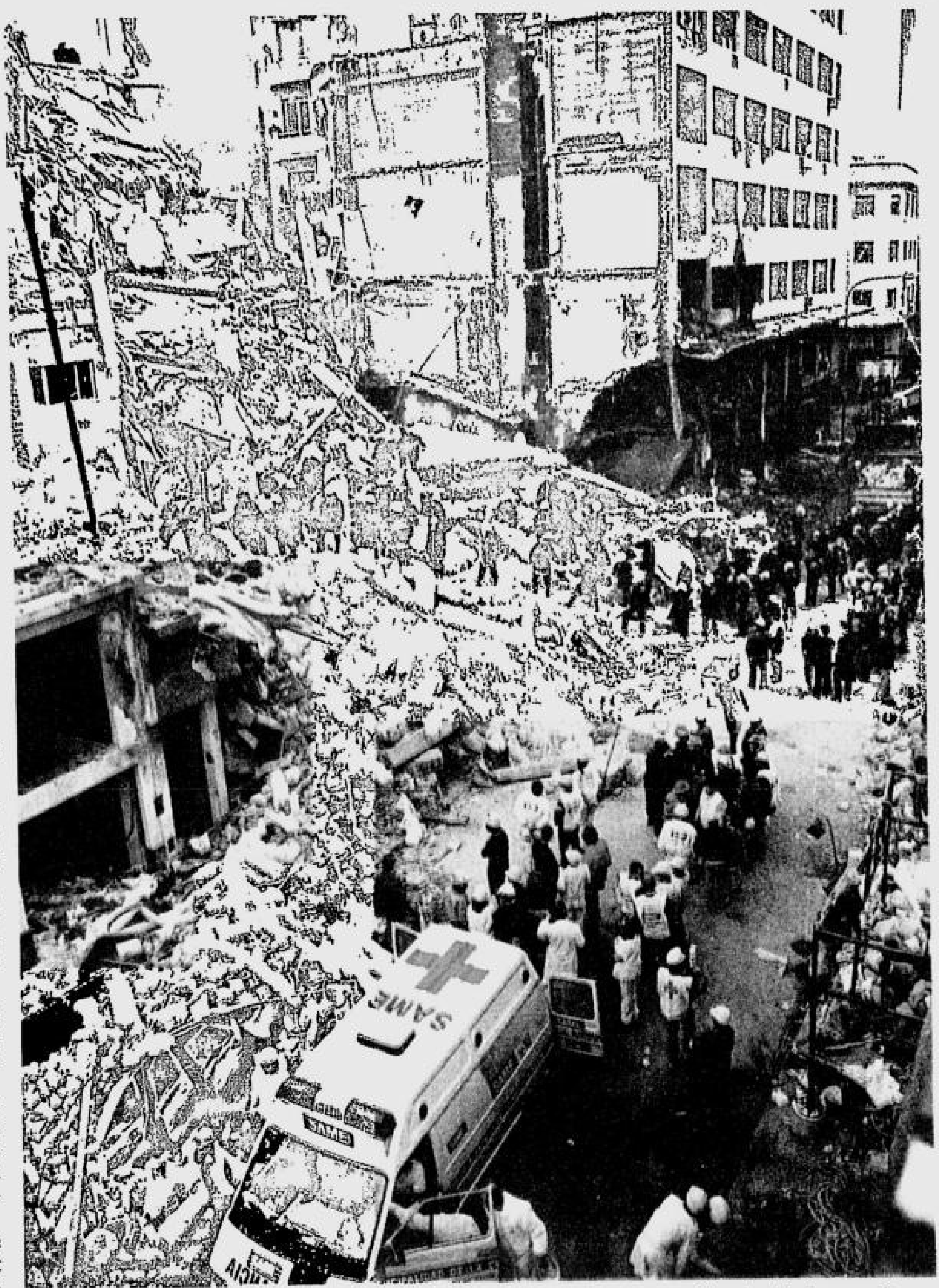
In a country with a murky record in pursuing the 12-year-old case, relatives and friends of the victims called on President Nestor Kirchner to take swift and strong action to bring it to trial.

In a statement, Argentine chief prosecutor Alberto Nisman declared: "We deem it proven that the decision to carry out an attack July 18, 1994 on the AMIA (the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association, a Jewish charities association headquarters in Buenos Aires) was made by the highest authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran which directed Hezbollah to carry out the attack."

AMIA, supported by Israel and the United States, had long accused Iran of organizing the attack and getting Hezbollah to carry it out.

Those accusations, based on intelligence gathered by the secret services of Argentina, Israel and the United States, have been consistently rejected by the Iranian government and Hezbollah.

In Beirut, a Hezbollah source said she had not yet heard that the Shiite militia had been formally charged but that it came as no surprise. *AFP*



FIREFIGHTERS and rescue workers search through the rubble of the Buenos Aires Jewish Community center in this July 18, 1994 photo after a car bomb rocked the building, killing 85 people. AP

New scans could prevent many lung cancer deaths

RESEARCHERS AT NEW YORK-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell hospital report that millions of lives could be saved by detecting lung cancer early with CT scans and treating it immediately, when it can still be cured.

The stakes are high: While the death rates for other cancers have fallen, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in this country, killing more than 160,000 people a year, or the vast majority of patients.

For years, doctors have thought there was very little they could do for lung cancer, but now with more sensitive scans, many are rethinking that view.

"You could prevent 80 percent of deaths," said the study's lead author, Dr. Claudia Henschke, a professor of radiology and cardiothoracic surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College.

But the report is controversial. Some medical experts and a patient advocacy group say that because this study is so much bigger than previous studies and so carefully done, it should change the testing landscape, while others say that the study did not include comparison groups to demonstrate clearly that there is any benefit from annual CT exams.

The study, published Thursday in The New England Journal of Medicine, involved more than 31,000 people in seven countries. The participants included smokers and former smokers, but also included people in Japan who had never smoked but had the scans as part of annual physical exams.

The scans found 484 lung cancers, 412 of which were at a very early stage. Then the researchers tracked those cancer patients for an average of about three years after the cancer was detected. After three years, most patients were still alive. The researchers projected that more than 80 percent of those with early-stage cancer would live at least 10 years after their cancer was diagnosed. *New York Times News Service*

Aussie Muslim leader hit over remarks on women

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIA'S MOST senior Islamic cleric sparked uproar Thursday after describing immodestly dressed women without headscarves as "uncovered meat" inviting sexual attack.

"They are appalling and reprehensible comments," Prime Minister John Howard told reporters. "The idea that women are to blame for rapes is preposterous."

The government's sex discrimination commissioner called for the cleric, Sheik Taj Aldin al-Hilali, to be sacked and deported from the country, where bikinis and miniskirts rule a sun-drenched lifestyle.

Al-Hilali made the comments in a Ramadan sermon to 500 worshippers last month in which he criticized women who "sway suggestively," wear makeup and no hijab or Islamic headscarf, The Australian newspaper reported.

"If you take out uncovered meat and place it outside on the street, or in the garden or in the park, or in the backyard without a cover, and the cats come and eat it ... whose fault is it, the cats or the uncovered meat?" he said.

"The uncovered meat is the problem. If she was in her room, in her home, in her hijab, no problem would have occurred."

Sex Discrimination Commissioner Pru Goward said Al-Hilali, who has the title Mufti of Australia, had a history of making such comments and should be thrown out of the country.

"It is incitement to a crime. Young Muslim men who now rape women can cite this in court, can quote this man, their leader in court," she told Australian television.

"It's time we stopped just saying he should apologize. It is time the Islamic community did more than say they were horrified. I think it's time he was asked to go." *AFP*

$128 from HK to London: First long-haul budget airline takes off

HONG KONG—HONG KONG'S Oasis Airlines, the world's first long-haul budget carrier, finally took off Thursday, a day after its maiden flight was delayed by Russia's last-minute refusal of overflight rights.

The carrier's inaugural flight left Hong Kong International airport at 1.21 p.m. (same time in Manila) heading for London's Gatwick Airport.

"We've been informed by very responsible and reliable sources that we can definitely fly through the Moscow air space today," Oasis chair Raymond Lee told reporters at the airport before the take-off.

Almost 300 passengers, including Lee and Oasis chief executive Stephen Miller, were forced to wait nearly six hours on board the plane Wednesday as it sat on the tarmac while officials tried to sort out the problem.

Eventually they were let off the Boeing 747 in the evening and told the flight would be rescheduled for the following day.

Lee admitted that the airline had learned of the refusal of the overflight rights an hour before the maiden flight was due to take off but said he had not informed passengers as management had believed the problem could be resolved.

While Lee insisted the airline had clearance from the Russian authorities, he said it only received the green light at around 8 p.m. Wednesday and again after midnight, hours after the flight was due to fly at 1 p.m.

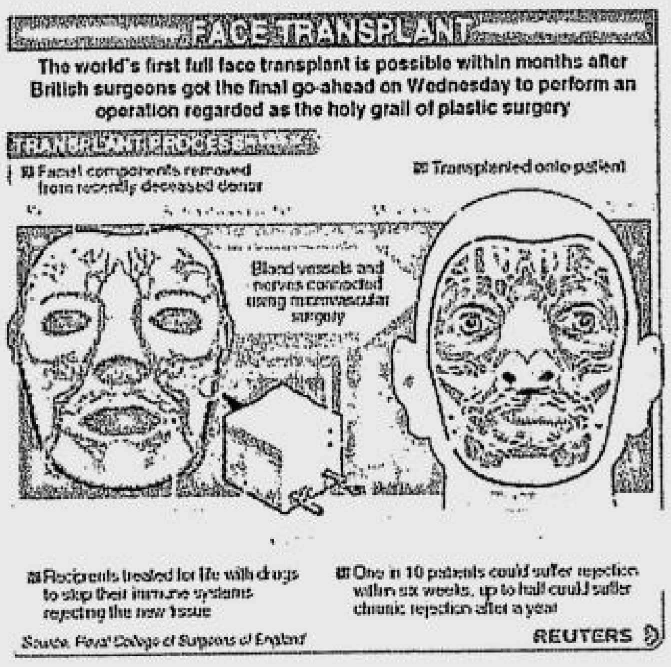
Lee said the withdrawal of approval from the Russian authorities came as a shock after more than a year of preparation.

"Every single document they've asked for had been supplied and that's why we were absolutely stunned and shocked that we were denied," he said, adding the Hong Kong authorities were following up the matter. *AFP*

OASIS HONGKONG

OASIS Hong Kong Airline's Boeing 747 takes off at the Hong Kong international airport Oct. 26. AP

Coup leader says little proof of Thaksin corruption


FACE TRANSPLANT
The world's first full face transplant is possible within months after British surgeons got the final go-ahead on Wednesday to perform an operation regarded as the holy grail of plastic surgery
TRANSPLANT PROCESS
Facial components removed from recently deceased donor
Transplanted onto patient
Blood vessels and nerves connected using microvascular surgery
Recipients treated for life with drugs to stop their immune systems rejecting the new tissue
One in 10 patients could suffer rejection within six weeks, up to half could suffer chronic rejection after a year

Source: Royal College of Surgeons of England

REUTERS

BANGKOK—INVESTIGATORS HAD failed to uncover solid evidence of corruption by Thailand's ousted premier Thaksin Shinawatra, the country's coup leader said Thursday, undermining the main rationale for the takeover.

However, Gen. Sondhi Boonyaratkalin advised Thaksin against returning in the near future and warned the military was on the alert for any risk of a counter-coup by his supporters.

"It will be difficult to implicate him" in major corruption cases, Sondhi told the Nation newspaper.

"I am not sure how far the Office of the Auditor General can investigate suspected corruption cases involving him. They might get nowhere at all," he said.

"We cannot impound the money he made with accountable legal evidence, but can only look for some possible hidden (evidence) with questionable background," the newspaper quoted him as saying.

Sondhi has repeatedly justified the bloodless Sept. 19 coup by saying widespread corruption during Thaksin's five years in office had undermined democracy.

Thaksin was in New York when the coup occurred, and has stayed in exile in London since.

His wife, Pojaman, had gone to meet him, but has since returned to Thailand.

She spent 15 minutes early Thursday meeting former Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda, a top adviser to Thailand's revered king, in an effort to secure permission for Thaksin's return. Neither Pojaman or Prem commented on the meeting.

Prem is believed to have played a key role in orchestrating the coup, and many of the leaders imposed by the military in government and in parliament have close ties to him.

THAKSIN AP

Sondhi quickly revived the nation's dormant corruption watchdogs and set up his own high-powered team of investigators to look into graft allegations against Thaksin.

"Under the previous government, widespread corruption was evident. The administration was plagued by irregularities," he told the paper.

But Sondhi acknowledged the military could lose the public support it has generally enjoyed since the coup if nothing emerged to back up specific corruption claims.

"We have tried to abide by the law and take all parties' concerns into account," he was quoted as saying.

"For example, the international community is watching to see whether human rights and civil liberties are being violated" during the corruption probes, he said.

"I know how the people feel. I guess I feel the same way when I watch soccer. I am always frustrated when waiting for my team to score and feel like getting on the field and playing myself," he said. *AFP*

World's 1st full face transplant OKd in Britain

LONDON—THE WORLD'S FIRST FULL FACE transplant is possible within months after British surgeons got the final go-ahead on Wednesday to perform an operation regarded as the holy grail of plastic surgery.

The UK Face Transplantation team at the Royal Free Hospital in London received permission for four transplants from the hospital's Research Ethics Committee.

"We can now begin to evaluate patients and draw up a short list of four people who want to undergo this procedure," said Peter Butler, the plastic and reconstruction surgeon who will head the team.

People whose faces have been destroyed by fire, accident and infection could be among those to benefit.

15-hour operation

Surgeons in France performed the first partial transplant in a 15-hour operation last year on Isabelle Dinoire who received a new nose, lips and chin after being mauled by her dog.

Butler said his team have developed psychological and surgical selection criteria to make sure they select the right patients for the surgery.

"We will continue to take a cautious and careful approach, and we will not be rushed. It may be many months before we are ready to carry out an operation," Butler said in a statement.

The ethics committee said it reached its decision after reviewing a decade of research results by Butler and his team.

"Ground-breaking research is always difficult and there will always be doubters and detractors," said Andrew Way, chief executive of the hospital.

"Face transplantation has been shown to be a successful treatment elsewhere and our team will now be able to begin the latest and most difficult phase of their work."

Holy grail for plastic surgeons

The pioneering surgery on Dinoire by Prof. Bernard Devauchelle and his team at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Amiens in northern France sparked an ethical debate and raised questions about the psychological impact of the procedure on both the recipient and the donor's family.

Although the microsurgery techniques needed for a full transplant are well established, little is known about the psychological impact and the long-term risk of the drugs the patient will take to avoid rejection of the new face.

Changing Faces, a charity that represents people with disfigurements, said it would have preferred the decision to have been delayed until the Royal College of Surgeons updated their recommendations on face transplants.

"Our main concern is to ensure that any patient who is being considered for this procedure has a full understanding of the risks and benefits, especially the risks associated with the immunosuppressant drug regime," the charity said in a statement.

Other experts welcomed the decision.

"Aesthetic replacement of the deformed or destroyed face has been a holy grail for plastic surgeons, with teams across the world exploring all aspects of this challenging process for the last 10 years," said Chris Cady of the British Association of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons (Bapras).

Enhanced quality of life

Andrew George, a professor of molecular immunology at Imperial College London, said the surgery will enhance the quality of life for a small number of patients.

"However, this will not be without risks, both physical and psychological, and it would be important that the patients are fully informed of these risks before surgery—as the ethics committee would insist," he said.

The Face Trust, a charity which has been set up to fund research for surgical reconstruction and facial transplantation, launched an appeal for money to fund the transplants, which are expected to cost at least 25,000 pounds ($46,940) each. *Reuters*

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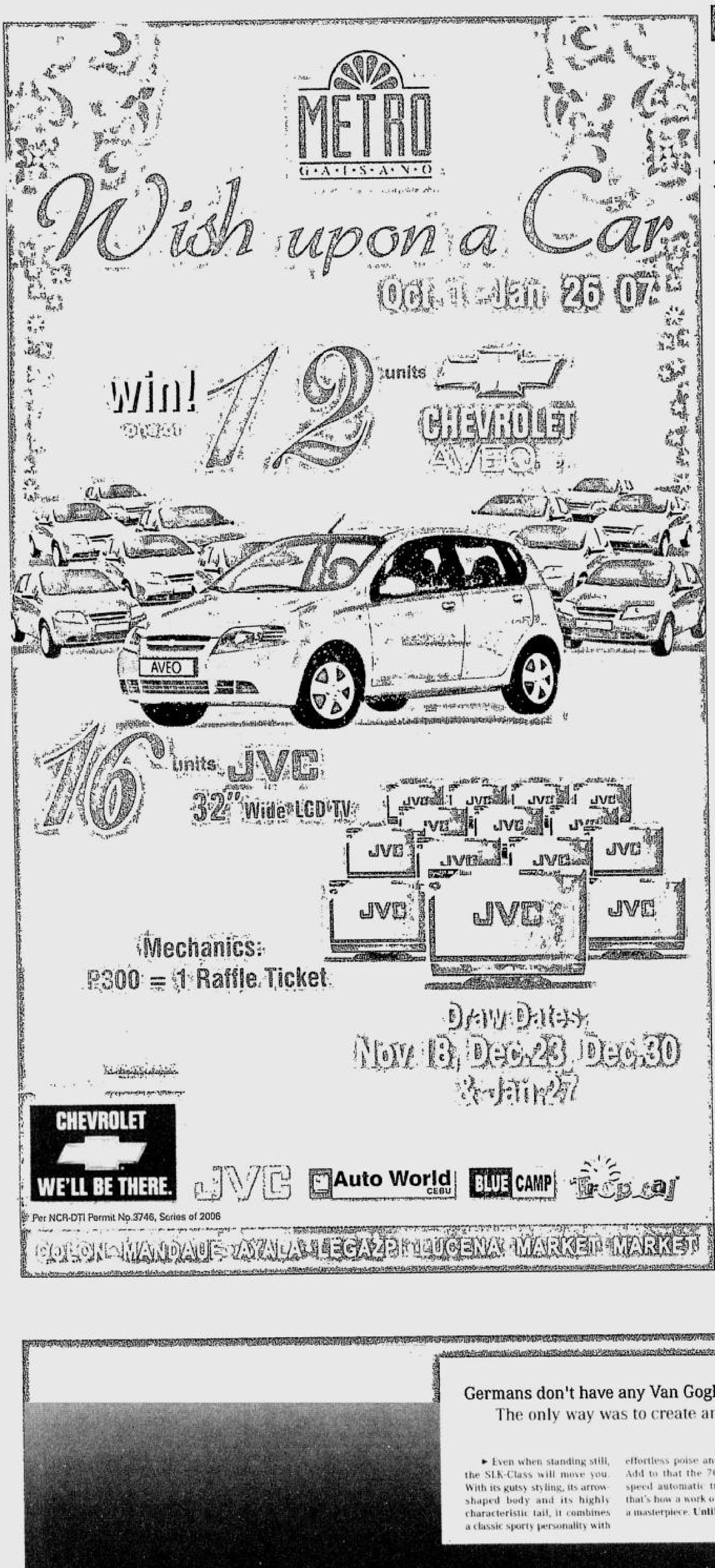

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Pinochet accused of hiding 9 tons of gold in HK bank

SANTIAGO, CHILE—CHILE'S GOVERNMENT SAID ON WEDNESDAY it is investigating reports that former dictator Augusto Pinochet hid about nine tons of gold in a Hong Kong bank, a claim his family and the lender have denied.

Pinochet, 90, has been charged with tax evasion linked to millions of dollars hidden in secret bank accounts. He is also being investigated for fraud and embezzlement related to that money, which has been frozen pending court cases.

Foreign Minister Alejandro Foxley said on Wednesday that the information about the gold was received several days ago and had been passed on to the State Defense Council, a prosecuting body.

"If this information is confirmed, it would be grave indeed," Foxley said on national radio on Wednesday.

Pinochet's lawyers and family denied any gold stash existed.

"There's no limit; they've reached this type of accusation and until now there is no evidence backing these unfounded accusations. We are being persecuted," Marco Antonio Pinochet, the former dictator's youngest son, told Cooperativa radio.

El Mercurio newspaper reported the gold was being held for Pinochet in Hong Kong warehouses of HSBC Bank Plc.

"There's no such thing, according to our initial investigation. We will fully cooperate with the Chile government on this if they request it," Vincent Cheng, chair of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp.—HSBC's Asian unit—told reporters on Hong Kong broadcaster Cable TV.

A spokesperson for HSBC had told the BBC news website earlier that it had started an investigation, but did not believe the bank holds gold or other funds for Pinochet in Hong Kong or elsewhere.

If confirmed, the find could raise powerful new suspicions about the wealth Pinochet accumulated over his 17-year dictatorship and further turn public opinion against him.

It was not clear how the information was relayed to Chile other than that it came through the foreign ministry.

"At this point it is in the hands of the justice system to investigate this," Defense Minister Vivianne Blanlot said.

Pinochet took power in a 1973 military coup that toppled Salvador Allende. Pinochet is under investigation for dozens of human rights crimes during his 1973-1990 rule, when an estimated 3,000 Chileans died in political violence.

PINOCHET in 2001 photo. AP

He was charged last year with evading taxes on an estimated $27 million hidden in more than 100 bank accounts outside of Chile.

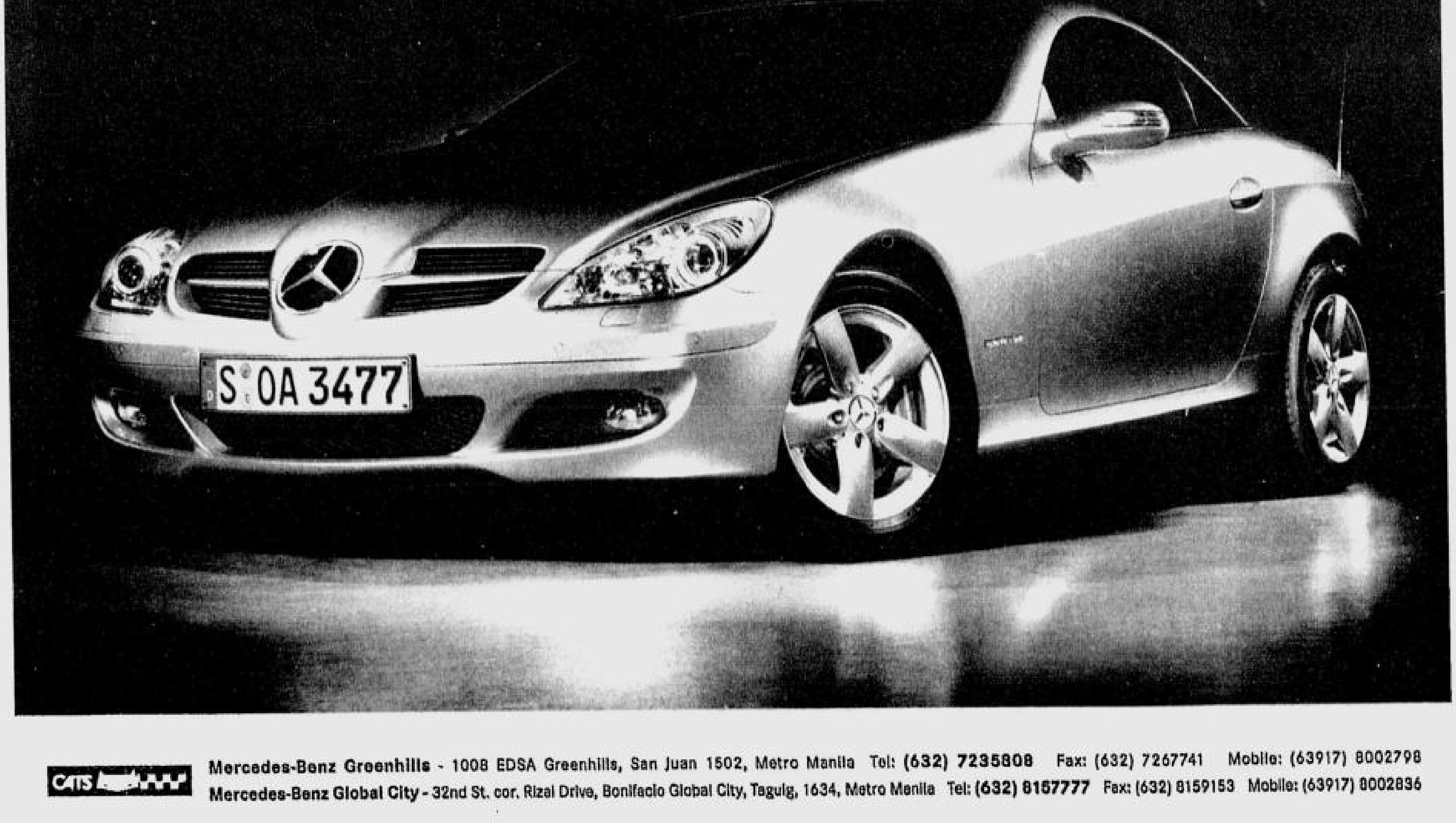
"I can say with absolute certainty that this information is completely and absolutely false," said Pablo Rodriguez, Pinochet's longtime lawyer.

Pinochet, 90, is no longer active in Chilean politics, but remains in the public eye because of the string of court cases against him.

His defense lawyers have argued he is unfit to stand trial for health reasons.

"I can tell you with absolute certainty that General Pinochet has never had a gram of gold in any foreign account," Rodriguez added.

Reuters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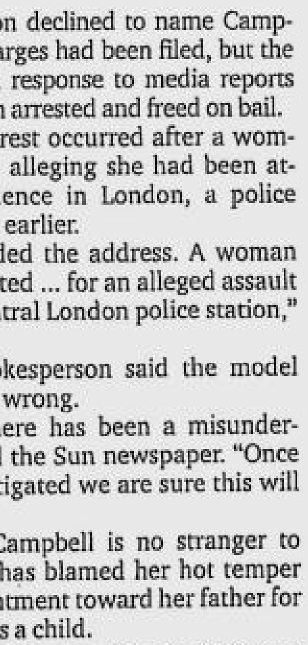
UK police arrest supermodel Naomi Campbell

LONDON — Supermodel Naomi Campbell was released on bail on Thursday after being arrested in London on suspicion of assault, British police said.


CAMPBELL REUTERS

"The 36-year-old woman ... has been bailed to return to a London police station on a later date in October," a police spokesperson said.

The spokesperson declined to name Campbell because no charges had been filed, but the comments were in response to media reports the model had been arrested and freed on bail.

Wednesday's arrest occurred after a woman went to police alleging she had been attacked at a residence in London, a police spokesperson said earlier.

"Officers attended the address. A woman aged 36 was arrested ... for an alleged assault and taken to a central London police station," he said.

Campbell's spokesperson said the model had done nothing wrong.

"We believe there has been a misunderstanding," he told the Sun newspaper. "Once police have investigated we are sure this will be resolved."

London-born Campbell is no stranger to controversy. She has blamed her hot temper on lingering resentment toward her father for abandoning her as a child.

Spotted on the streets of London's Covent Garden tourist area when she was 15, Campbell was the first black model to appear on covers of the French and British editions of Vogue magazine.

She has acted in several films and launched her own cosmetics range.

Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE

Manila still holds sway after Day 4 /A32

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

Text us your feedback: Inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Rain washes away Game 4; series reset for Thursday /A35

Miñoza a shot off lead with 67

HYOGO, JAPAN—FRANKIE MINOZA BOUNCED back from a miserable stint last week to shoot a 5-under-par 67 yesterday and trail the leader by just a stroke at the start of the Y120,000,000 (P50,400,000) ABC Championship here.

The 47-year-old Filipino star, who missed the halfway cut at the Bridgestone Open in Chiba last Friday with rounds of 73-74, sizzled with nines of 33-34 at the par 36-36 ABC Golf Club course.

The only Filipino regular in the rich Japan Golf Tour gunned down seven birdies against two bogeys to tie Japan's Azuma Yano (34-33) and Korean Kim Jongduck (34-33) for second place.

MIÑOZA: Back in form.

The trio was just a shot off first-round leader YE Yang of Taipei, who fired a six-under 66 on nines of 33-33.

Gregory Meyer held solo fourth with a 68.

Defending champion Shingo Katayama of Japan shot a 71 on a day that saw 32 players broke par.

Frankie had four birdies and a bogey on the front side and three birdies and another bogey coming home.

Minoza's best finish in the current tour is a tie for fourth in the Under Armour KBC Augusta championship in Fukuoka last August. He is currently ranked 44th in the money list with earnings of Y17,845,437 (about P7,495,083).

To underscore his status as the country's No. 1 golfer, Frankie is also the best placed among seven regular in the Asian Tour where he is No. 50 overall with earnings of $67,302 in legs.

Rookie pro Juvic Pagunsan is No. 51 with $66,574 in 12 tournaments with Angelo Que holding 55th place with $60,466 in 22 events.

Payla, 2 other RP pugs gain finals

LIGHTWEIGHT GENEBERT BASADRE, FLYweight Violito Payla and bantamweight Joan Tipon beattheir respective semifinal rivals to enter the Tammer Cup International Boxing championships finals in Tampere, Finland.

Using crisps combinations, Basadre and Payla registered Referee Stopped Contest-Outclassed (2nd round) victories over Canadian Ryan Rannelli and Danish Nogaad Rugemalira, respectively.

Not to be outdone, Tipon, who like Basadre is a Manila Southeast Asian Games gold medalist, also stopped local bet Al Khaghani in the third round.

PAYLA

TIPON

Light-welterweight Delfin Boholst and welterweight Francis Joven had to settle for the bronze medals as they lost their semifinal bouts.

Boholst succumbed to the foxy Finnish Jussi Koivula, 30-15,while Joven suffered a cut on the left eye in the third round and bowed to his rival from Africa.

Payla will meet Hungarian Olympian Pal Bedak, while Basadre tests the mettle of Frenchman Jean Gomis. Tipon tackles Canadian Isho Shiba.

The week-long slugfest featuring leading boxers from Europe, Asia and Africa is being used by Team Philippines as the final phase of its training for the 15th Doha Asian Games on December.

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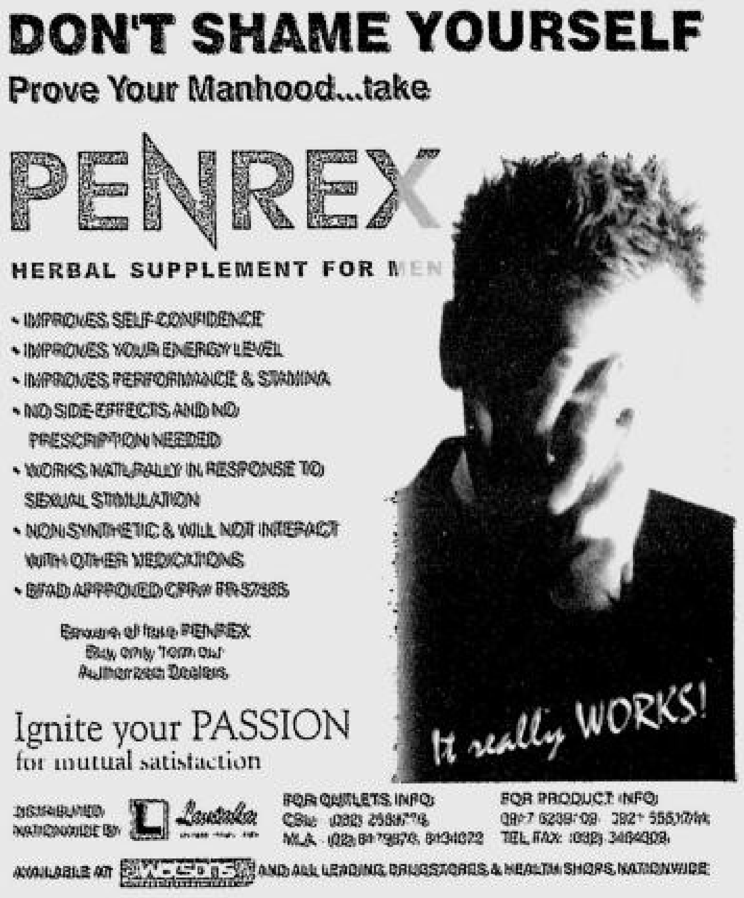

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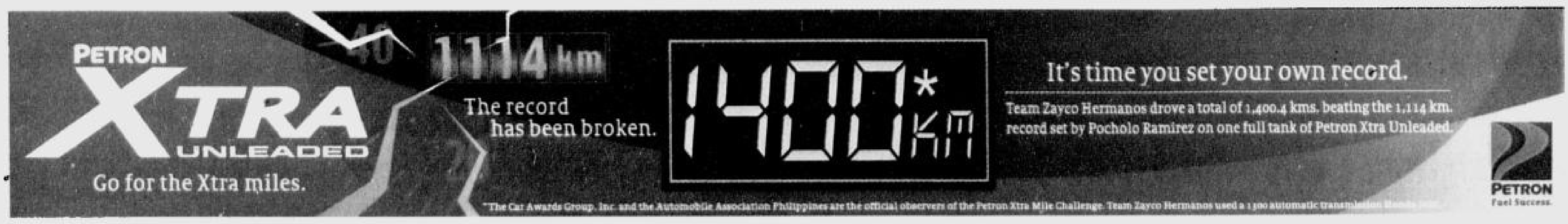

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Magnolia taps Ekwe-led Lions for PBL Silver Cup

By Jasmine W. Payo

MAGNOLIA ICE CREAM MAY HAVE scored a casting coup but coach Koy Banal is not entirely worry-free going into the PBL Silver Cup set to start Nov. 11 at the San Juan Coliseum.

Height is still a concern for Banal even if Magnolia now has San Beda's prized 6-foot-8 center Nigerian Sam Ekwe.

"We are a short team," said Banal. "Even with Sam, if you compare us with other teams, they have a legitimate 3-man (small forward) who stands at 6-foot-4 or 6-foot-5."

Ekwe and the stars of NCAA titlist San Beda Red Lions now grace the roster of Magnolia plus a handful of other varsity stars, although Banal said there's still a lot of hard work to be done.

"We're quick, but almost half of them are rookies in the PBL," said Banal, who also coaches San Beda "We're still working on the chemistry of the team. But it's not that hard. The players that we picked have the right attitude and they can easily go well with the other players."

Magnolia, which partnered with the Far Eastern Tamaraws when Banal was stil the team's head coach, boosted its lineup by picking up flashy guard Bonbon Custodio of the University of the East and FEU point guard Jonas Villanueva in the recent rookie draft.

Also in the lineup are Lions top gunner Yousif Aljamal, Pong Escobal, Ogie Menor, Alex Angeles, Riego Gamalinda and Jay-R Taganas.

But most of the attention will be on Ekwe, the imposing slotman who led the NCAA both in rebounds and blocks in his debut this season.

Ekwe averaged 8.5 points, 13.8 boards and 2.8 blocks per game to clinch the NCAA Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year plums.

"There will be changes in the complexion of the PBL because you have a 6-foot-8 who gets all the rebounds and contests all the shots," observed PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad. "But at the end of the day, basketball is still a team sport."

"He can be an added attraction to the league," added PBL executive director Butch Maniego. "It's also one way for our big men to improve their skills further."

Joining Magnolia in the nine-team field are last conference champion Harbour Centre, Toyota Otis, Sista, Hapee, Teletech, Mail and More, Cebuana Lhuillier and Kettle Corn.

"I'm excited about this conference," said Banal. "It will be a challenge for the San Beda players to bring their level of play to the level of the PBL."

MY GAMES

Manila still holds sway after Day 4

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MANILA SUSTAINED ITS TRACK AND FIELD SPLURGE YESTERDAY EVEN AS TWO youngsters emerged as the winningest athletes in the 2nd Manila Youth Games national invitational at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

The host city picked up three more golds from athletics and one more in badminton to raise its harvest to 31. The Big City athletes also boast 17 silvers and 13 bronzes with still three days left in the competitions.

Rolando de Ramos provided the face of Manila's dominance when he won his third gold medal of the competition, bagging the boys' 16-17 200-meter dash to go with his triumphs in the 100 and 400 earlier.

Barefoot runner Rhealyn Pascua of Candon City, Ilocos Sur, also collected her third golf after winning the 12-under baseball throw. She earlier triumphed in the long jump and 100m dash.

Refusing to wear her new sneakers, Pascua still wowed the crowd with her exploits.

The fourth in a brood of six, Pascua said she started to get interested in the sport while regularly beating her classmates in races from her house to the Catamora Elementary School, a half-kilometer away.

"I'm very excited to play here because it's my first time in Manila," said Pascua in Filipino. The lean, 4-foot-10 Pascua, a daughter of a security guard, has also won four silvers and one bronze.

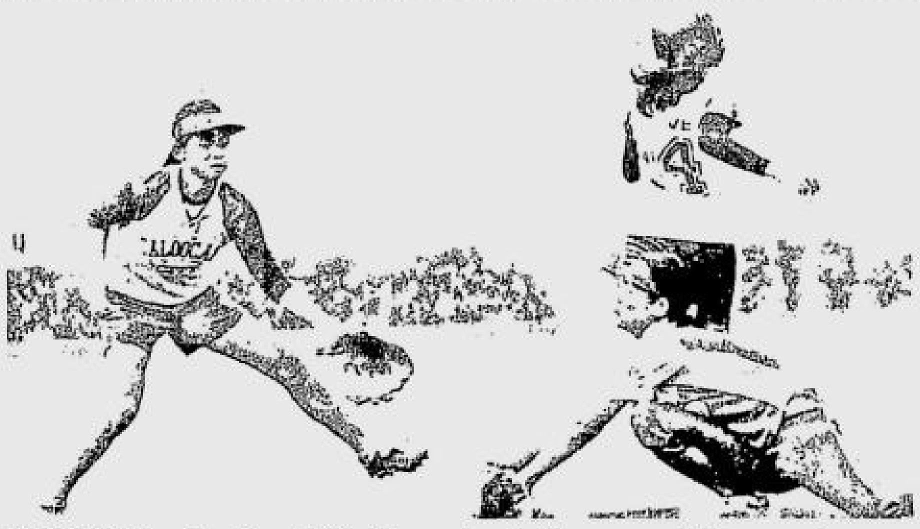
Over at the San Andres Gym, Kevin Acosta won the 8-under badminton for Manila.

Quezon City, with a gold-silver-bronze tally of 10-12-9, stood a far second in the overall race.

Baguio City was third with a 6-7-6 tally, while Laguna Province (5-6-4) and Candon City (5-6-4) round out the top five.

Taking the other golds for the host city were Rogiemar Umingan Jr. in the boys 12-under 50m dash and Sheryl Bajar in the girls 12-under 50m dash.

BAGUIO'S Katherin Santos on her way to the girls' 16-17 triple jump gold. ERIK ARAZAS



MANILA'S Rose Ann Llave (14) safely reaches first base on a catching error by Jovelyn Dacuba of Caloocan. At left is Genalyn Ytario. ERIK ARAZAS

Bautista in US for fight with Brazilian

UNDEFEATED FILIPINO STAR REY "Boom Boom" Bautista is back in the United States with trainer Edito Villamor to prepare for a forthcoming fight.

Bautista, who arrived on a PAl flight yesterday, was immediately whisked away by a waiting vehicle owned by Oscar De la Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions.

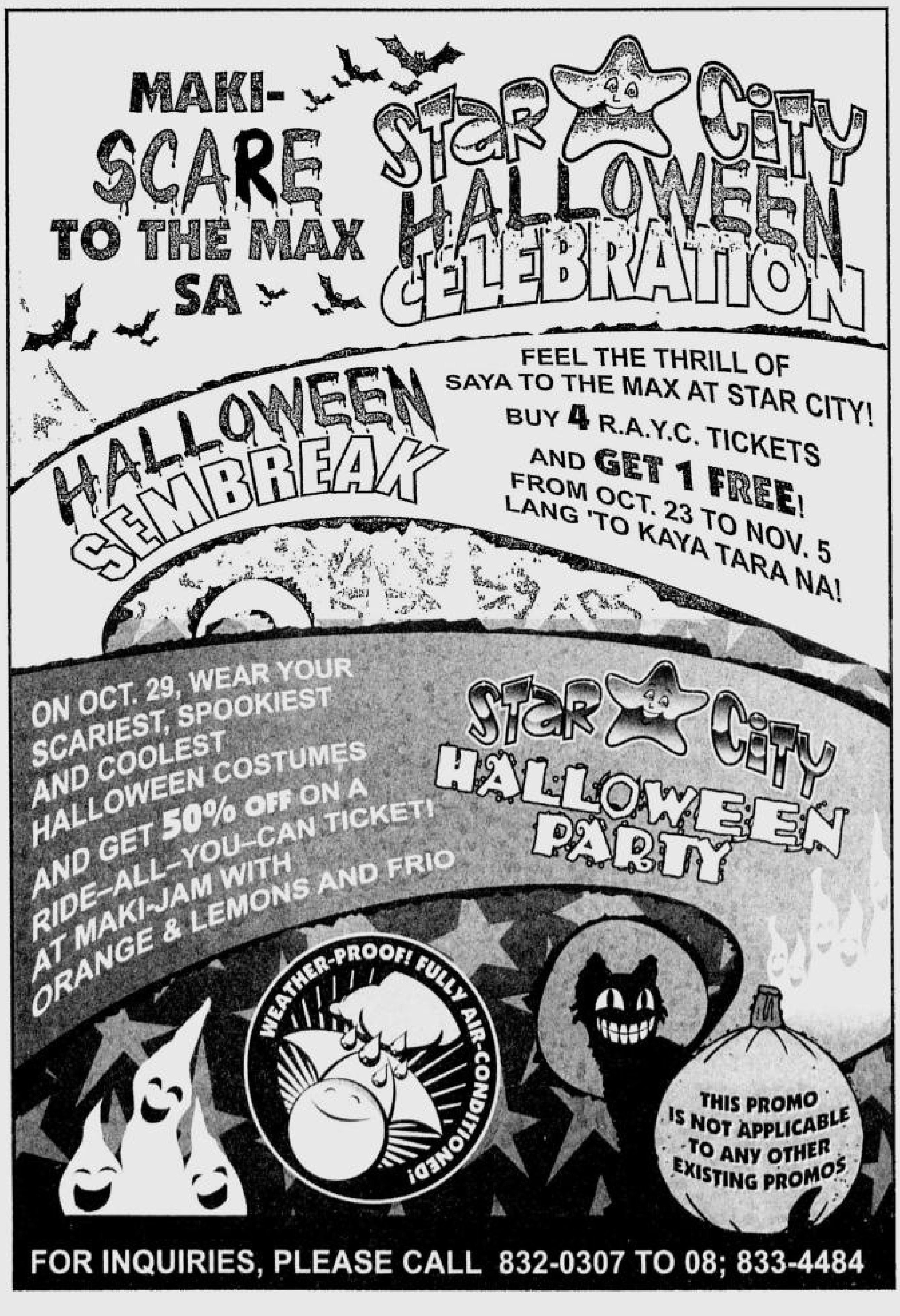
Today, Bautista and Villamor are expected to report to the Wild Card Gym in Hollywood, California, where he will train under Freddie Roach.

Although Roach is busy preparing superstar Manny Pacquiao, the bespectacled ring tactician is expected to find time to be at Bautista's corner when he faces Brazilian Giovanni Andrade on Dec. 2 at the St. Pete Times Forum in Tampa, Florida.

Bautista's chief handler Antonio L. Aldeguer, in an interview yesterday at the famed ALA Gym in Cebu, said his protege is raring to see action ollowing his long absence from the ring.

Prior to his departure, Bautista had been working out at the ALA gym, and had even decked sparmate Leon Maratas with a wicked body shot during a public sparring session at Aldeguer's swanky Fight Club.

"I am healthy and ready to resume my training. I am praying I will be able to see action on Dec 2 as scheduled," Bautista said in an earlier interview prior to his American trip. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*



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Del's junior may soon be athletics' biggest deal

By Marc Anthony Reyes

"I'M HAPPY MY NAME IS BEING MENtioned again."

They were, roughly, the proud remarks made by Isidro del Prado yesterday after his son and namesake recalled his glorious past with two gold medals in the ongoing Manila Youth Games national invitational track and field championship.

On the same Rizal Memorial Sports Complex where del Prado shone brightest in the 80s, his 15-year-old son won the 400 meters and then starred in the 4X400-meter relay victory of the Manila team the other day.

Both were pet events which eventually gave the Sorsogon-born Del Prado five Southeast Asian Games gold medals.

"Very proud *ako at nabuhay muli ang pangalan ko*, at least *naalala yung mga na-*accomplish *ko nung araw*, (I'm very proud that my son brought back memories of my accomplishments with his victories)," the 47-year-old Del Prado told the INQUIRER through the phone.

Now a coach, Del Prado, whose popularity in his heyday was eclipsed only by two-time Asian Games sprints champion Lydia de Vega, is in Baguio City handling the Asian Games preparation of the national team.

Passion for track

Del Prado is in charge of honing the skills of the relay teams and the 400m runners.

Isidro Jr. is the second of three kids now in high school at the San Sebastian College in Manila.

"He only learned the basics last summer. I'm very surprised that he picked up fast. I hope he would continue his interest in the sport that has been very good to me," added the elder Del Prado in Filipino.

Del Prado, whose wife and kids reside in Marikina City, said his youngest, 11-year-old Michael Carlo, has also shown passion for track and field but he reckoned that he is too young to seriously pursue it.

Groomed to run

"Junior is also being groomed to run in the four-low (400 hurdles) but it may be too soon for him," he added.

Del Prado has competed in the 1981, 1983, 1985 and 1989 SEAG. He also won a bronze medal in the 4 x 400 relay in the 1986 Asiad as star of a team known as the Bicol Express quartet.

Meanwhile, Candon City's Rhealyn Pascua and Manila's Rolando de Ramos emerged leaders in the race for the most outstanding athlete award after winning their third gold medals yesterday.

Pascua, a 12-year-old barefoot competitor, ruled the 12-under baseball throw to go with her victory in the long jump and 100-meter dash in the first two days of the athletics competitions.

A daughter of a security guard and fourth in a brood of six, Pascua also had four silvers (50m, 4X400 relay, 4X100 relay and discus throw) and a bronze (200m).

SPORTSWATCH

PCCA finals derby today

WHO WILL BAG THE THE 2006 STAGFIGHTER OF the Year title of the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association? The winner will be known today as the PCCA 5-Stag Championship Derby gets going at 2 p.m. at Pasay City Cockpit featuring 94 matches sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. After five derbies, four participants lead the race with 15.5 points each: Lito Roque (JC Power Ranger), Gerry Ramos (Against All Odds), Ric de Guzman and Gov. Ito Ynares (Coffee King Binangonan) and Rey Soberano (LB Candelaria). Within striking distance, with 15 points each, are Arman Santos (Jade Resort), Dodie Villarubio (Madvil Rav 4 Gamefarm) and Cyrus Hao (Clyde and Yce). For inquiries, call 843-1746, 843 -1890 or 816- 6750.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—Mandalay Bay (2), My Little AFrica (4), Gentleman's Lady (3)

Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—U Are My Sunshine (5), Dixie The Younger (8), Vitality (3), At All Cost (2), I Love This Game (5)

Race 3—(Tri)—Crystal City (4), Sharp Cookie (5), Golden Song (3)

Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Feverishly (7), Sand Feebles (1), Irene's Fantasy (2), Dancing Polly (4)

Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Lady Be Gold (2), Kusang Loob (7)

Race 6—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Pride and Joy (6), Teresina/Miss Fantasy (2), Ruah (1), Ziraz (9), Super Wind (3), District Three (5)

Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—The Boss Daughter/Ultra Rose (1), Zubaica (4), Davao Queen (6), Mojito (5)

Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Virgin Island (8), Odyssey (1), Carmelita (3), Top of D'Line (6), Imperial Manila (5)

Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Fujiok/Sustained Pressure (4), Daijobo's Success (8), Our Sailor Moon (10), Humble Beginnings (9), Arctic Desert/Dalcross (1), Crowning Glory (3)

World-class netters due for Holcim ladies netfest

AREVALO

THE PHILIPPINE TENnis Association goes international anew next month when it holds the Holcim-ITF Women's Circuit, a $20,000, two-leg tournament set Nov. 5 to 19 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Eighteen world-class campaigners in the top 1,000 of the Women's Tennis Association from eight nations, including local ace Czarina Mae Arevalo, have been given slots in the 32-person main draw while a slew of other bidders from 11 more nations will play in the qualifiers for eight slots in the main draw.

Filipino wild cards

Aside from world No. 584 Arevalo, who is seeded second, four other Filipinas will be given wild cards while two others will be handed special exempts.

In store for the winners are ranking points and cash prizes with the singles champion earning $1,568 and six WTA points. The runner-up gets $980 and four points while the semifinalists and quarterfinalists will be awarded $490 and two points and $245 and 1.5 points, respectively.

Top eight seeds

Heading the cast is Hong Kong's world No. 489 Wing-Yau Venise Chan while seeded third and fourth are Chrissie Seredni of the United States (642) and Thassha Vitayaviroj of Thailand (698).

Completing the top eight seeds are Kao Shoyun of Taiwan (699), Biffy Kaufman of the USA (725), Lam Po-kuen of Hong kong (735) and Lyoo-Suh Hee-sun of South Korea (736).

Deadline for the Week 1 qualifying sign-in is 5 p.m. of Nov. 4 with the qualifiers being held on Nov. 5-6. Play in the main draw starts on Nov. 7.

Week 2 is slated on Nov. 13-19, according to tournament director Johnny Jose.

Baseball's Asiad fate known today

By June Navarro

EMBATTLED: Members of the national baseball team put their hands together in last December's Manila Southeast Asian Games. AP

BASEBALL'S ASIAN GAMES FATE WILL BE DECIDED TODAY.

If the Philippine Amateur Baseball Association (Paba) fails to produce today the funds needed to cover its participation in the Doha, Qatar Asiad, the only team sport in the Philippine delegation is gone.

"We have to give them (baseball officials) time to come up with the money. But they must produce it now for the (Philippine) delegation to meet its schedule," said Philippine Sports commissioner and deputy cheif of the mission Richie Garcia said yesterday.

Paba needs to raise P2 million for its 22-member team based on a PSC rough estimate of at least P90,000 for each member of the 351-strong national contingent.

But Paba president Hector Navasero has only produced P300,000 while expecting the PSC to shoulder the rest of the amount.

'I beg them to help us'

"Pulling out of the Asian Games is definitely not an option," said Navasero. "I beg them (PSC) to help us."

Navasero said the PSC still owes Paba P600,000 which the association advanced to hold a baseball event last year. He said the government agency had promised to reimburse the amount.

Garcia confirmed Navasero's claim but said that baseball would still be short by P1.1 million even if the PSC pays the amount now.

"It's a long shot but we could probably request that the funding earmarked for baseball in future tournaments be released for the Asian Games," said Navasero.

The P90,000 earmarked for each member of the team will be spent for air fare, allowances, parade uniforms, competition uniforms and bags.

Billeting and accommodation in the Asian Games village are free.

Navasero said the team, which is scheduled to join the first batch of athletes who will leave on Nov. 16, would use the uniforms they used during the Manila SEA Games last year just to be in the Asiad.

PSC chair and chef de mision William "Butch" Ramirez, however, disagreed with Navasero, saying they want every member of the national team to wear new uniforms.

Lhuillier in good graces with top POC, PSC brass

BUSINESSMAN JEAN HENRI Lhuillier was formally installed as the country's softball czar by no less than Philippine Olympic Committee president Peping Cojuangco Wednesday night.

Philippine Sports Commission chair William Ramirez was also present when Lhuillier, a longtime sports patron, officially took over as Amateur Softball Association-Philippines president, replacing former Rep. Harry Angping.

Angpin remains in the association as a board member.

Other officers inducted were Rolando Rivera, executive vice president; Jose Miguel Jimenez, VP for Visayas; Jeffrey Santos, VP for Luzon; Jose Munoz, VP for Mindanao; Venerando Dizer, treasurer; and Luis Climaco and Dr. Pol Mathay, board members.

In a brief speech, Cojuangco advised the new ASA-Phil officials to strengthen their charter.

The induction effectively quashed a protest filed by a disgruntled group led by former Asa-Phil chief Mario Raymundo and secretary general Filomeno (Boy) Codiñera. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Busy sked for Chef de Mission; athletes to pay President a visit

RAMIREZ

PHILIPPINE SPORTS Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez will have a busy schedule as Chef de Mission of the Philippine team in the run-up to the Doha, Qatar Asian Games.

Prior to his departure to the Asiad, Ramirez will represent the country in several functions in connection with the Doha Games, starting with the general assembly of all coaches, athletes and team officials on Nov. 3 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Ramirez is to meet the 351-man Philippine delegation on Nov. 9 for the distribution of handbooks and for photo opportunities with the members of the national team.

On Nov. 14 or Nov. 15, the representatives of Team Philippines will pay President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo a visit at the Malacañang Palace before Ramirez leaves for Doha on Nov. 16.

On his first day in Doha, Ramirez is set to begin his nightly meetings with deputy chef de mission Richie Garcia and Mario Tanchanco along with the different heads of the 33 national sports associations.

Before D-day, a flag-raising ceremony is scheduled on Nov. 30 with the RP Ambassador to Qatar Isias Begonia as special guest. *June Navarro*

Why can't I come home?
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INQUIRER

Tough field plunges into action in Wakeboard Natl's

TOP FILIPINO AND FOREIGN ENTRIES plunge into action today in the Philippine Cable Wakeboard Nationals at the CamSur Watersports Complex in Pili, Camarines Sur.

Seeded entries from the United States and Australia such as Brian Grubb, Donald Shelbrick, JD Webb, Keith Lidberg and Reuben Buchanan are vying for top honors against 70 local wakeboarders in the prestigious competition.

Up for grabs are the championships in the Boys Division, Junior Men's, Open Ladies, Master Men's, Open Men's and Wakeskate Division.

"We expect this year's edition of the Wakeboard Nationals to be very exciting since most of the riders, especially the veterans, have been training hard for this competition," said Philippine Waterski and Wakeboard Federation (PWWF) chair and Camarines Sur Gov. Lray Villafuerte yesterday.

"Our local riders are very eager to show that they can match, and even outdo, the skills of the foreign riders."

The event will be held at the new CamSur Watersports Complex, also the venue of the 2008 International Water Ski Federation (IWSF) Cable Wakeboard World Championships.

Located within the provincial capitol complex, it was opened on May 21 and boasts a six-point cable ski system—the only one in the world.

The complex got rave reviews from IWSF president Kuno Ritschard and topnotch international riders who graced its opening.

Among the foreign riders who sampled the complex were Australia's Sam Collins, ranked No. 1 in the world junior men's category; Germany's Peter Pascal Schmidt, No. 2 in the junior men's category; Austria's Daniel Fetz, ranked 9th in the Open men's category; Open women's No. 1 Eva Koch of Germany; and American Heather Johnson, No. 3 in the junior women's category.

20 marks fall as FEU rules

Avalanche of record performances highlights athletics battles

By Cedelf P. Tupas and Christian Irl Tan
Inquirer Visayas

FEU's Orlando Soriano edges UE's Gabriel Quesada (left) and Ateneo's Joboy Quintos (partly hidden) for the 110-meter hurdles gold. ANDY ALVAREZ

BACOLOD CITY—AN AVALANCHE OF records fell in the University Games yesterday with defending champion Far Eastern, starring Sharon Jizmundo, accounting for six to highlight its domination of athletics.

On a day when 10 meet marks were eclipsed, the Tamaraws raised their victory tally to 29 with Jizmundo ruling the women's 400-meter in 58.98 seconds, before topping the 100 and 200 meters in 12.43 and 25.32, respectively.

The record-breakers were Orlando Soriano in the men's 110-m hurdles in 14.91 seconds; Jenny Agato in the women's 400 hurdles in 1:03.90; Zara dela Virgo in the women's 100 hurdles in 14.53 seconds; and Marriz Contoner in the triple jump who leapt 11.80 meters.

FEU's men and women's 400-m relay squads also swept their respective events in record-breaking fashions. Jeffrey Lozande stood at the forefront of the Tamaraws' assault in the men's sprint events, winning the 100 and 200 meters events by clocking 10.79 and 22.10, respectively.

Riezel Buenaventura posted a 3.20-meter effort to reign supreme in the women's pole vault.

Also striking gold for FEU were Nelbert Ducusin, who clocked 4:00.90 to rule the 1,500 meters and Rey Villacube, champion in men's javelin with a 52.77-meter heave.

Sharing the limelight with the Tamaraws was Bernadette Mag-aso of Palawan, a junior education student, who added another gold to her collection by topping the 5,000-m run in 19:07.97. It was Mag-aso's third gold, following her triumphs in the 800 and 3,000.

University of Santo Tomas also grabbed three golds courtesy of Jun Rey Bano, who set two new meet marks in the 400-m (48.85) and 400-m hurdles (53.75), and Ben Alejandrino, the new 5,000-m record-holder in 15:48.54.

University of Cordilleras' Eliezer Sunang improved his own shotput mark by heaving 14.25m.

In taekwondo, University of the East regained the men's title with three golds, while national champions Rubylyn Mapa and Pauline Reyes powered Bacolod-based John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation to its first-ever women's crown.

Ruling their respective events for UE were Dustin Delarazzabal (flyweight), Jeffry Figueroa (featherweight) and Brix Ramos (lightwelterweight).

In basketball, reigning champion West Negros College dumped Adamson, 76-71, in a no-bearing game as both teams had already been assured of quarterfinal slots.

The other quarterfinalists are former champion St. Francis of Assisi, Emilio Aguinaldo College, Jose Rizal University, Holy Cross of Davao College, University of St. La Salle and University of Iloilo.

In women's basketball, Ateneo de Manila University and Lyceum clash in the semifinals at 2:30 p.m. today before the La Salle-FEU duel at 4.

Over at the Paglaum pitch, De La Salle University beat Silliman U, 3-1, to arrange a semis clash with sister school St. La Salle, 3-0 winners over Foundation University.

WNC, last year's losing finalist, shut out Xavier University, 5-0. The Wesnecans meet University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos for a place in the finals.

In women's football, De La Salle strengthened its bid for an eighth straight title, blanking Ateneo, 5-0, for its fourth win, while Santo Tomas cruised to a 10-0 triumph over Silliman U.

Gonzales wins over Russian, ties for 16th

FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL MASTER Master Jayson Gonzales trounced Russia's Sergey Fokin on Wednesday to catch up with compatriots IM-elect John Paul Gomez and IM Oliver Dimakiling after the sixth round of the Calvia Chess Festival in Mallorca, Spain.

Gonzales improved his total to 4.0 points, the same output of Gomez and Dimakiling, who expectedly drew their match. They were among those bunched at 16th to 33th places.

In the seventh round, Gonzales faces GM Sarunas Sulskis of Lithuania while Gomez meets IM Fabiano Caruana of Italy. Dimakiling will be pitted against IM Stefan Wehmeier of Germany.

IM Darwin Laylo of Lipa City and 13-year-old IM Wesley So of Bacoor, Cavite, were lodged at 34th to 46th places with 3.5 points each.

Laylo settled for a truce with IM Mario Lanzani of Italy while So bested Anthony Guennoun of France.

Laylo will test the mettle of Russian Dennis Kutuzov while So collides with Spanish Fide Master Juan Ramon Galiana in Round Seven.

Briton GM Stuart Conquest downed GM Branko Damljanovic of Serbia and Montenegro to grab the solo lead with 5.5 points

GM Aleksa Strikovic, also of Serbia and Montenegro, and GM Oleg Romanishin of Ukraine share 2nd place with 5.0 points apiece. Strikovic and Romanishin drew their Round Six encounter. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

TRAP HEAD IN LAUSANNE: Triathlon Association of the Philippines (Trap) president Tom Carrasco (left) meets with Olympic Games executive director Gilbert Felli at the recent International Triathlon Union (ITU) World Championships in Lausanne, Switzerland. Felli was a special guest of ITU president Les McDonald. Carrasco attended the ITU executive board session where he represents Asia as senior vice president of the Asian Triathlon Confederation.

PPT Cebu-Lahug elims gets going Saturday

THE NON-WAGER PHILIPPINE Poker Tour resumes this Saturday with the holding of the satellite tournament at the Casino Filipino Cebu-Lahug at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City.

The winners will earn seats in the Million-Peso Hold'em Philippine Championship set Dec. 16 and 17 at Casino Filipino Pavilion in Manila.

The biggest poker skills tournament in the country stakes P3 million in total prizes with the champion going home with P1 million.

Cebu City is the second leg of the PPT southern swing which kicked off last week with the Bacolod City satellite tourney.

After Cebu, the tour will return to Tagaytay City before moving back to the Visayas anew on Nov. 11 with the satellite tournament at Casino Filipino Mactan at Waterfront Airport Hotel in Lapu-Lapu City.

Details about the venues and schedules of other qualifying events are posted on the Philippine Poker Tour website at www.PhilippinePokerTour.com. For inquries, call 817-9092 or 812-0153.

La Salle alumni friends may join 'All In! All Green!' poker

FRIENDS OF LA SALLE ALUMNI may now vie in the inaugural "All In! All Green!" non-wager Texas Hold-em Poker Tournament for a Cause tomorrow at the Airport Casino.

The De La Salle University Silver Jubilarians Batch '82, in partnership with Pagcor, will host its first major event prior to their homecoming on March 3 next year. The event is open to all students or alumni of any La Salle school in the country.

Their friends from other schools can also join but they must be accompanied by a La Sallian.

Six winners will meet in the finals to compete for non-cashable casino chips worth P100,000 from Pagcor and Samsung digital appliances.

Entry fee is P2,000. Registration starts at 12 noon tomorrow. The event is for players 21 and above.

Kevin Trudeau: hero or heel?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS MEDDLING IN the affairs of American entrepreneur Kevin Trudeau, but I'm writing about him just the same mainly because he is the organizer of the International Pool Tour. The IPT launched with great fanfare last year the world's richest billiards events, including last month's $3 million IPT World 8-Ball Open held in Reno, Nevada, where Efren "Bata" Reyes emerged champion.

Almost overnight, the 42-year-old Trudeau became the man of the hour, regarded by many as a savior to pool. But his sudden entry into the world of billiards has also been met with apprehension, distrust and cynicism. Six weeks after the IPT Open in Reno, Trudeau has yet to pay the winners. He has apologized for the delay, saying he fully understood and acknowledged the players' frustration and concern. But he assured them they will be paid within the shortest time possible, especially now that the negotiations between Ho Interactive (owned by Macau billionaire and gambling mogul Stanley Ho) and IPT have been finalized.

Trudeau launched the IPT in August 2005 with a $225,000 match between Billiards Congress of America Hall of Famers Mike Sigel and Loree Jon Jones for the IPT World 8-Ball championship. The comebacking Sigel won and pocketed the champion's purse of $150,000, then the biggest prize in US pool history. However, pool guru and Billiards Digest publisher Mike Panozzo said many questions were asked when Trudeau first announced the Sigel-Jones match-up. "Critics quickly alerted players and industry reps about Trudeau's controversial past," Panozzo recalled. (Trudeau had spent 24 months in federal prison for credit card fraud and larceny.—*MRI*)

"When you create something new, like the IPT, the first reaction isn't 'Great!' It's 'Witch! Charlatan!' That's what happens," Trudeau said. He pointed out that the opening quote in his best-selling book, "Natural Cures They Don't Want You To Know About," is by Albert Einstein who said, "Great spirits always get violent opposition from mediocre minds." His book, which has so far sold more than three million copies, espouses cures and remedies that don't require drugs and surgery. A pioneer of infomercial, Trudeau is now worth more than $2 billion.

In 1982 a credit card company cancelled his card, for reasons the young Trudeau feels were unjustified. He retaliated, Panozzo said, by getting another card using his middle name, Mark.

"Trudeau insists everything he charged to that card was paid off promptly, but when it was discovered, it clearly constituted credit card fraud." Around the same time, Panozzo continued, Trudeau bounced seven checks from accounts he had in various banks around the country, constituting seven counts of larceny. Although Trudeau insists the mistake was simple miscalculation and there was no intent to defraud ("No one lost a penny," he says), the crimes earned him 24 months in federal prison.

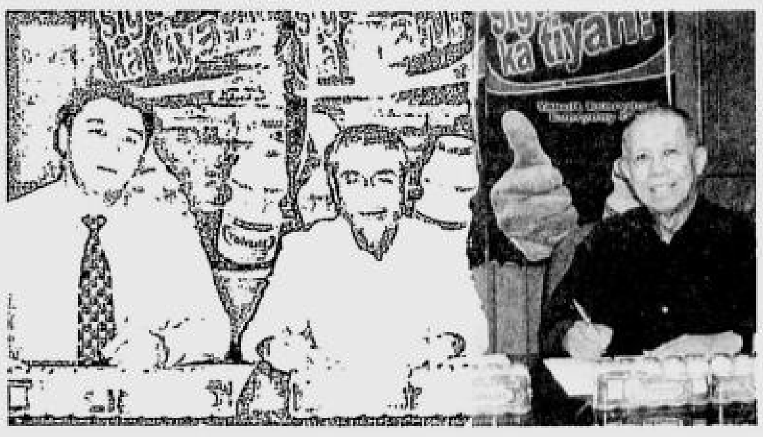
His stint at the minimum security prison camp in Boron, California, served as a strong wake-up call to the value of ethics. By the mid-1990s, he was back in business, selling products from memory courses to weight-loss programs on television and becoming one of America's fastest-rising business entrepreneurs.

Trudeau started his checkered business career at an early age. Born in Lynn, Massachusetts, he sold newspapers, cut neighbors' lawns and dressed as a clown while performing magic tricks at children's parties. He also worked as a pin boy at a bowling alley where he got his first taste of pool.

"Look," Trudeau said in a recent interview. "I'm not trying to be a savior to pool. That's not my motivation. My motivation is always, first and foremost, to positively impact the whole person. I know a lot of pool players and I like them. But they've always struggled. How cool would it be to do something where your friends could do really well, and you could do really well, and you're all having fun together?"

IPT's goal, he stressed, is to complete Ho's acquisition and get all the players paid immediately so that his group can focus on the Masters Tournament in Chicago and the future.

"Our plans," Trudeau said, "are to bring the company public in January. We are working out something to make all IPT players partners in this venture with many ways to benefit them financially beyond just tournament winnings."



YAKULT 10 MILER: The holding of the annual Yakult 10 Miler, the country's biggest 10-mile foot race, on Dec. 3 at the CCP Complex is formalized in a memorandum of agreement recently by (from left) Yakult Phils. assistant manager for sales and planning Michael Ong, Yakult Phils. executive vice president Akira Onose and race organizer Rudy Biscocho.

Chairman's Cup golf: Hyundai car for an ace

A BRAND-NEW HYUNDAI GETZ car courtesy of Hyundai Otis will be up for grabs as hole-in-one prize in the Chairman's Cup, which gets under way today at the Forest Hills Golf and Country Club in Cogeo, Antipolo.

To spice up the tournament, staged in honor of Forest Hills chair of the board Ferdinand Santos, organizers announced that they are putting up a P100,000 prize for another ace. This will be raffled off if no one scores a hole-in-one.

Other hole-in-one prizes include a club car from the Turf Company and a brand-new Wilson golf set from Wilson Sports.

Over a hundred participants are clashing for top honors in different classifications in the two-day tournament which ends tomorrow.

Participants will also be entitled to a Rudy Project jacket as giveaway, free caddy fee plus dinner during the awards night on Oct. 28.

Rain washes away Game 4; series reset for Thursday

BASEBALL fans huddle after Game 4 between the Tigers and the Cardinals was postponed due to rain in Major League World Series in St. Louis. Another fan wearing a baseball mask shares their dismay. REUTERS

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI—RAIN SHOWERS forced postponement of the fourth game of the 102nd World Series here Wednesday, delaying the pivotal matchup in Major League Baseball's best-of-seven final until Thursday.

The St. Louis Cardinals have a two games to one lead over the Detroit Tigers and will host games four and five when conditions allow, although forecasts are bleak with more cold rain predicted for the next two days as well.

"You expect there's a good possibility you could run into this kind of weather," Tigers manager Jim Leyland said. "We might as well all be prepared for some tough, ugly conditions." No World Series game had been postponed by bad weather since game one in 1996 with Atlanta at the New York Yankees, although the entire 2001 final was pushed back a week after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Scheduled off day

Game five, which had been planned here Thursday, was pushed back to Friday, what had been a scheduled off day to allow for travel with games six and seven, if necessary, in Detroit on Saturday and Sunday.

"We're both in the same boat," Cardinals manager Tony La Russa said. "We will just deal with it." Snow showers are in the weekend forecast for the Motor City should the Tigers send the Series back to their ballpark.

But it might be the weekend before games are played here with a 70 percent chance of rain Thursday and worse for Friday.

"That would be an unfortunate circumstance for us but if we had to that is probably what we would do," said Jimmie Lee Soloman, major league vice president of baseball operations.

Three days to play

Only three games in World Series history have been postponed more than one day because of rain, the most recent being game six in 1975 when Cincinnati waited three days to play game six at Boston.

The only other Series multiple washouts came in 1962 and 1911.

St. Louis right-hander Jeff Suppan, who has allowed only one run in his past 15 innings, and Detroit right-hander Jeremy Bonderman could take the mound as planned but the delay opens other pitching possibilities for both clubs.

"I think you lose track of days during this time of year," Suppan said. "Extra day, short rest, I don't know if that really matters. You just go out when they tell you to pitch with what you've got and do the best you can." La Russa was considering Anthony Reyes, the rookie right-hander who was a surprise star in a game one St. Louis victory at Detroit, and game two loser Jeff Weaver for game five. Now Weaver could start that game on normal rest.

"Everybody is ready to go. Everybody is on call whenever they are needed," Weaver said.

Short rest

"A rainout gives you another day of rest. That always helps. I've done my preparation for short rest. Everything feels good. Either way I feel like it's not going to matter." Reyes is ready whenever he gets the call.

"I always go at it like I'm going to pitch so I do everything like I did before and if I don't go I prepare for the next one," he said.

Tigers right-hander Justin Verlander, who won 17 games this season but lost game one without reaching top speed on his fastball, was set to go in game five for Detroit.

"I've come back. My arm feels great," Verlander said. "Maybe my mechanics had a little effect. I wasn't driving with my legs as much as I had been.

"I wouldn't mind another couple days' rest." The Cardinals have not won the crown since 1982 and their 83-win season would be the worst ever for a Series champion, but they are only two triumphs shy of their 10th World Series crown.

"I think we've fought ourselves into a heck of a chance," La Russa said.

The Tigers have not won the Series since 1984 and are only three years removed from an American League-record 119-loss season, part of a run of 12 consecutive losing seasons. *AFP*

Tigers spurn proposal to play finals on neutral site

ST. LOUIS—THE WORLD SERIES BElongs in the home towns of teams that reach the Major League Baseball championship regardless of how bad the weather might get, Detroit manager Jim Leyland said on Wednesday.

Leyland shot down a suggestion that baseball should consider playing its championship in a neutral, warm weather site, at a news conference before Wednesday's rainout of Game Four at Busch Stadium.

"I would never go for that," Leyland said. "I love this. I don't care how miserable it is."

Tuesday's Game Three was played in biting cold in St. Louis with the Cardinals winning 5-0 to take a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven championship.

"I think it would be a crying shame to take something like this away from the fans of St. Louis or the fans of Detroit. I would never go for that," Leyland said.

Baseball's six-month, 162-game schedule is now followed by two sets of playoffs before two teams are left to contest the Fall Classic, which now runs to the end of October. *Reuters*

Howard, Jeter get Aaron Award

DEREK JETER: Second in batting

ST LOUIS—YOUNG SLUGGER RYAN Howard of the Phillies and Yankees sparkplug Derek Jeter were selected by fan-voting as winners of the Hank Aaron Award as outstanding offensive performer in each league, Commissioner Bud Selig announced on Wednesday.

Howard, 26, belted 58 home runs to lead the major leagues in 2006 and set a club record with the National League's Philadelphia Phillies. The first baseman, who won Rookie of the Year honors last season, also led the majors in runs batted in with 149.

Jeter finished second in the American League batting race with a .343 average, finished second in runs scored (118), tied for third in hits (214) and was fourth in on-base percentage (.417).

Hank Aaron, who in 1974 surpassed Babe Ruth's record 714 career home runs, and went on to establish the current major league record of 755, was also on hand to present the awards.

"I'm extremely proud that I'm sitting here today to give this award to two of the players that I think have exemplified what I think Major League Baseball is all about," Aaron said, praising both players for their performance on the field and the way they carry themselves off it.

Howard, who helped the Phillies make a late-season run at the playoffs, said he had a lot of fun in 2006.

"It's been a pleasure this season. It was a blast," Howard said. *Reuters*

F1 season begins, ends same way

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL—THE 2006 FORMULA one season finished looking just like the beginning: A consistent Fernando Alonso in his Renault and a mishap-plagued Michael Schumacher so quick in his Ferrari.

In between, Alonso's early-season streak made it seem the championship would be a rout, but then Schumacher surged, looking for a final parting gift.

Instead, Alonso reigned as Schumacher retired.

"We have had a very tough season and a very close fight with Ferrari," Alonso told workers at the team's factory in Enstone, England in his final visit before switching to McLaren next season. "Time puts everybody in their place, and we are in (the top position) because we deserved it more than the others."

The 2007 season-opener, the Australian Grand Prix on March 18, will mark the first F1 season without Schumacher since 1991.

But there's another fast German coming up—19-year-old Sebastian Vettel, a test driver for BMW-Sauber. The youngest driver to participate in a grand prix weekend, he won 18 of 20 races as a 16-and 17-year old in the Formula BMW German race series.

In the meantime, Kimi Raikkonen and Felipe Massa will carry the torch at Ferrari.

At the start of the 2006 season, it looked like Ferrari was back after a dismal 2005 season, qualifying 1-2 at the Bahrain GP.

But Alonso won the race, the first of six victories in the first nine races to establish a 25-point mid-season lead.

Schumacher finished second in that opening race but had an engine problem the next race and tire problems in the season's third race.

After the Canadian GP at the end of June, it seemed Alonso was counting down to his second straight title.

Then Ferrari got it right.

Schumacher won five of the next seven races, with teammate Felipe Massa winning another. *AP*

Gun-toting NBA players alarm Stern

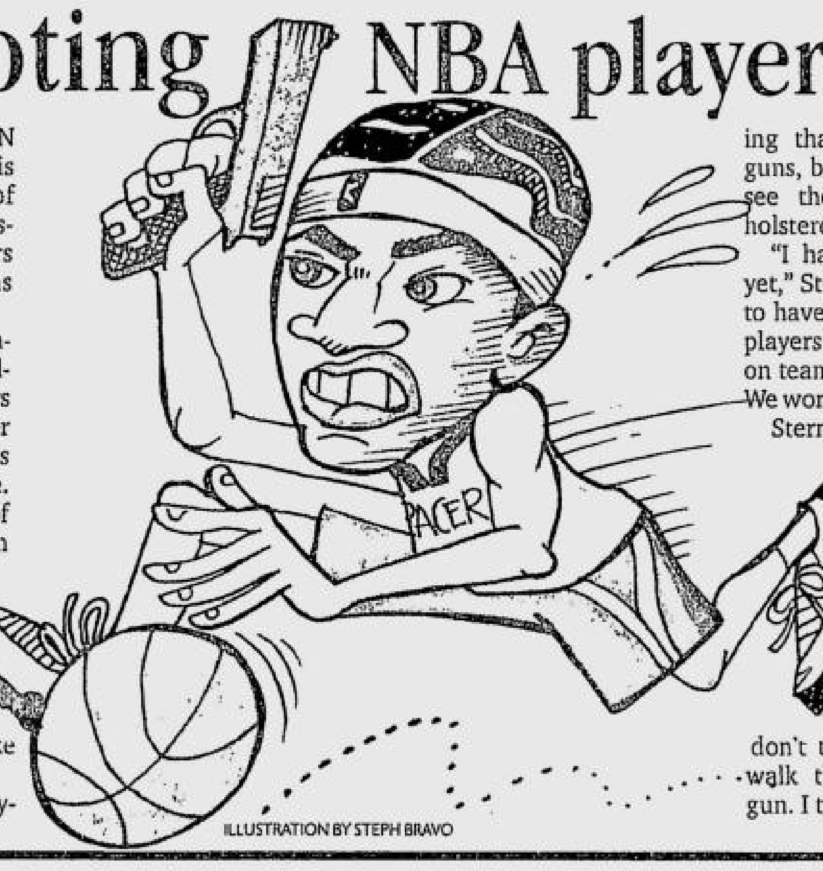


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

NEW YORK—DAVID STERN said Wednesday he is alarmed by the number of gun-packing National Basketball Association players who say they need firearms for protection.

"We think this is an alarming subject," Stern said. "Although you'll read players saying how they feel safer with guns, in fact, those guns actually make them less safe. And it's a real issue." Many of the NBA's American-born players own handguns. North American guns laws range from very severe penalties in Canadian cities like Toronto to very liberal rules in states like Texas.

There is no league rule saying that players can't own guns, but Stern would like to see the gun-toting players holstered.

"I haven't put it to them yet," Stern said. "We're happy to have the rule that says the players can't carry (a firearm) on team and league business. We work incrementally."

Stern would rather the players leave their guns in the privacy of their home.

"I would favor being able to have a firearm to protect your home, period," he said. "I don't think it's necessary to walk the streets packing a gun. I think it's dangerous for our players." Stern was reacting to a pair of incidents that took place earlier this month.

In Indianapolis, Pacers forward Stephen Jackson was arrested on felony charges after firing his gun in the air five times following an altercation outside a strip club.

A police investigation found Jackson's teammates Jamaal Tinsley and Marquis Daniels also to have guns in their car at the time of the incident.

In another incident, Boston Celtics guard Sebastian Telfair was found to be carrying a gun onto a team flight.

He said he had grabbed the wrong bag when packing for the trip and mistakenly took the gun, which was licensed to his girlfriend. *AFP*

Nalbadian advances easily, keeps pressure on Federer

DAVID Nalbandian: Comfortable passage. AFP

BASEL, SWITZERLAND—ARGENtine second seed David Nalbandian enjoyed a comfortable passage into the second round of the Swiss Indoors on Wednesday to maintain some pressure on world number one and local favorite Roger Federer.

Nalbandian, who can only meet Federer in Sunday's final, defeated Croatian lucky loser Roko Karanusic, 6-2, 6-4, to set up a second round encounter with Spanish world number 80 Feliciano Lopez.

Defending champion and third seed Fernando Gonzalez also advanced after a surprisingly hard fought 7-6, 6-7, 7-6 win over Italian world number 124 Simone Bolelli.

Nalbandian made light work of the 179th-ranked Karanusic, with two breaks of serve in each set. The Argentine unnecessarily surrendered a service game while serving for the match at 5-2 but he made no mistake with his next opportunity and calmly finished off with an ace.

Nalbandian has an added incentive for reaching Sunday's final as it will guarantee him a spot at the season-ending Masters Cup, where the Argentine is hoping to defend the title.

Looking less fresh after his defeat by Federer in last weekend's Madrid Masters final, Gonzalez needed more than 2-1/4 hours to beat Bolelli.

On a generally good day for Argentina, seventh seed Jose Acasuso and ninth seed Juan Ignacio Chela both progressed to the second round.

Acasuso defeated Spain's Albert Montanes, 6-4, 6-3, while Chela beat Italian Filippo Volandri, 6-4, 7-5. Argentine Agustin Calleri was beaten, 7-6, 6-2, by Switzerland's Stanislas Wawrinka.

The 21-year-old from Lausanne continued an impressive start for the local favorites, following Federer and wild card George Bastl into the last 16.

Britain's Tim Henman, a winner here in 1998 and 2001, will face Wawrinka in the second round after booking his own berth with a 2 6-3 win over Belgium's Christophe Rochus. *Reuters*

SPORTS

MPLFA battle tough Lion City squads

TEAMS FROM THE MUNTINLUPA, Parañaque, Las Piñas Football Association go up against strong Singaporean age-group squads as part of their training in the city state starting tomorrow.

Aiming to boost the playing standards of its promising youthful members, the MPLFA will join the week-long training camp starting tomorrow.

Club president Cathy Rivilla said the club's teams were invited by the Football Association of Singapore and the prestigious Singapore Sports School.

Among the members of the MPLFA contingent are standouts of the team that won the Girls' Under-17 national title and those who will represent the club in the Boys' Under-19 nationals in Zamboanga City in late November.

Rivilla said the training camp participants will come from schools in the area like Southridge, Woodrose, La Salle Zobel, Southville and Perpetual Help.

The Filipinos will clash with the Bishan Arsenal FC, Meridien JC Girls, Singapore Sports School, Nanyang Polytechnic and the Singapore Under-19 team.

"When we plan, we prepare long term," said Rivilla. "This trip is the beginning of a series of training camps to improve the MPLFA members' level of play."

MEMBERS of the MPLFA boys' and girls' squads pose for posterity in the ongoing Manila Youth Games National Invitational football tournament.

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RAZON FOOTBALL

Tough wins for Army, PAF booters

AIR FORCE AND ARMY OVERCAME TOUGH FOES TO REMAIN UNscathed after the fourth week of the Terry Razon Copa Filipina football championship last weekend.

The Airmen, among the pre-tournament favorites, nipped Pasargad, 2-1, while the Armymen nosed out Lions FC, 3-2, to chalk up their second straight victories in the event organized by the National Capital Region Football Association.

In another tightly contested match, Union FC shaded Far Eastern University, 3-2, for its first win in two matches in the event held in honor of the late football patron Terry Razon and backed by the Philippine Sports Commission.

To underscore the keenness of the competition, Ateneo and Lions FC battled to a scoreless draw last Tuesday at the Ateneo football grounds in Loyola Heights.

Army controlled the tempo in the early going and surged to a 3-0 lead at halftime on Glen Pardo's strike in the 38th minute.

But the Lions came roaring back in the second half as Michael Tan and Mark Tiu countered with goals in the 56th and 65th minutes.

Joebel Bermejo scored first for Air Force with a bristling marker in 28th minute before former national player Jezruel Tonog made it 2-0, 20 minutes into the second half.

But the complexion of the match drastically changed when Xerex Velasquez struck for Pasagrad in the 75th, prompting the Airmen to shore up their defenses.

Union had striker Ross Calixterio to thank for in its come-from-behind triumph over the FEU booters, who had surged to a 2-1 lead after Jovanie Simpson scored in the 14th and 17th minutes.

The enterprising Calixterio tied the score in the 36th and then completed his fireman's job with the go-ahead goal in the 68th, a looping shot just inside the penalty box.

Mendoza shows 'em in Superstock 2nd rd.

BENJO MENDOZA BANKED ON experience and his mastery of the track to rule the second round of the 2006 Philippine Underbone King Championship Series at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas.

Mendoza failed to compete in the Superbikes Series against Jolet Jao due to engine trouble and instead turned his attention to the 150-cc Superstock class of the event sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association and sponsored by the BRC Association.

Posting a fastest lap time of 2 minutes 7.377 seconds, Mendoza finished the eight-lap morning race in 14:58.935.

He came home 15 seconds ahead of Maico Buncio. Tomas Bauzon placed third followed by Jaime Barcial and Bien Uy.

Mendoza was even faster in the afternoon, clocking 2:06.731 in the second lap. He wrapped up the race in 15:56.255 to complete the sweep against Barcial and older brother BJ Mendoza.

Filipino-Japanese Masato Fernando and Aaron Amani split honors in the 110-cc Superstock.

Fernando had a tough time warding off Herbert Lopez, needing a big effort in the final lap to ensure his win. He won the morning race in 17:15.328 or 0.156 of a second ahead of Lopez.

Amani, who was disqualified in the first race, stole the limelight in the second race, clocking 17:13.048 or just 0.286 of a second ahead of Fernando.

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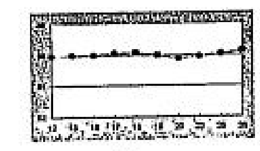

P49.880 = $1 As of 5 p.m., Oct. 26, 2006

Bangko Sentral to prepay $215M in loans

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY RETESTED THE YEAR'S PEAK OF 49.88 against the dollar as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas announced plans to take advantage of the strong foreign exchange inflows by paying more external debts ahead of maturity.

"We have notified our creditors last Monday that we are prepaying loans, part of which will mature next year and another portion in 2008," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters.

The BSP approved the prepayment of $215 million worth of loans, bringing to $1.17 billion the total amount of debts set to be retired ahead of maturity for this year.

PESO/ B4

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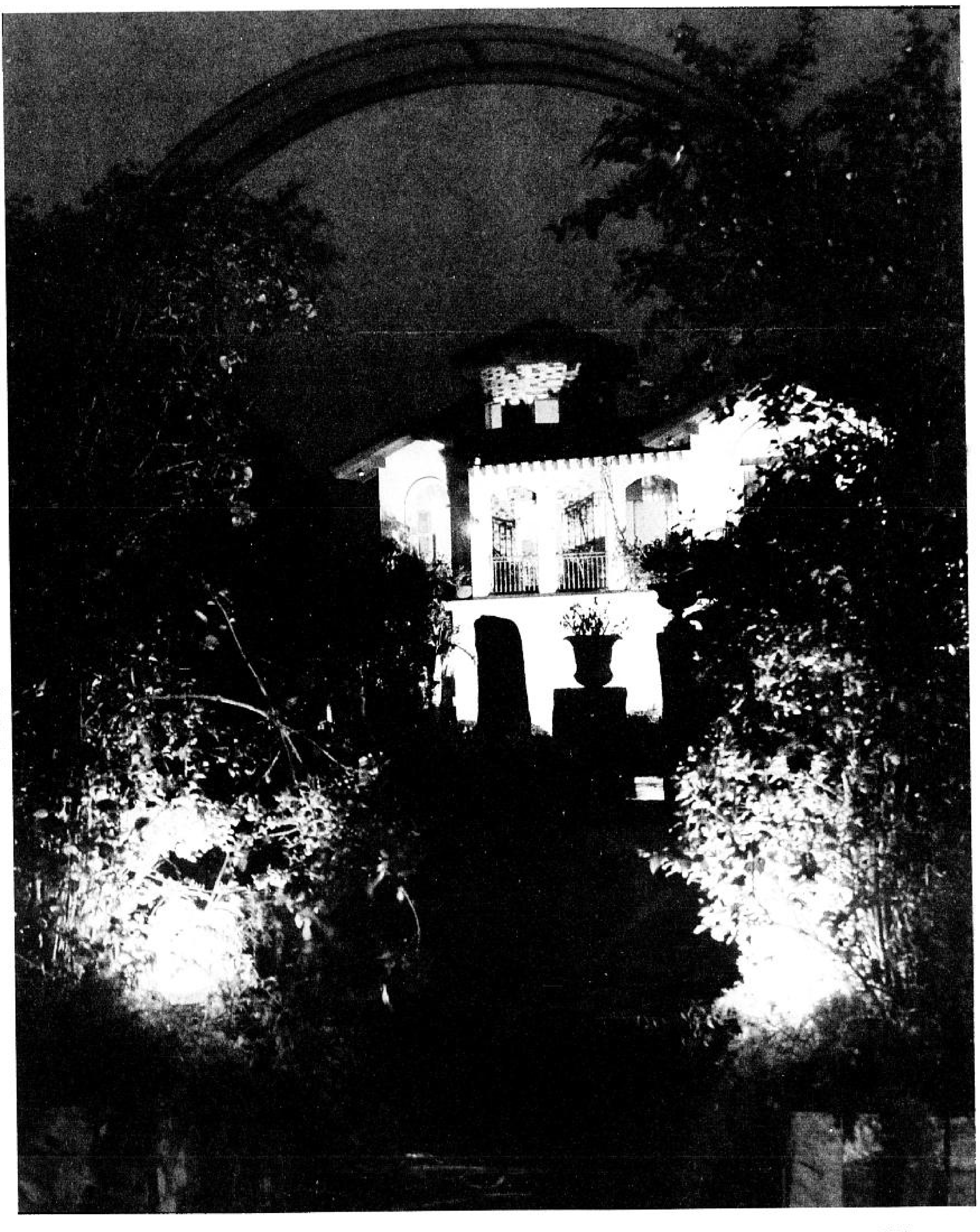
Photos by Wig Tysmans



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Bangko Sentral seen easing limit on banks' dollar holdings

Reintroduction of cap on the amount that can be sold eyed

By Doris C Dumlao and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS IS considering relaxing its foreign exchange restrictions on banks' dollar holdings by the end of this year.

The central bank imposed a limit on the amount of dollars that banks were allowed to keep at the height of the 1997 Asian currency crisis, which brought about a sharp devaluation of the peso.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday told reporters that the overbought or dollar holdings limit imposed on banks—now at 2.5 percent of unimpaired capital or $5 million, whichever is lower—was under review.

"The requirements of the economy have gone up and this merits a review of whether an increase would be appropriate," Tetangco said.

Prior to the 1997 Asian currency turmoil, the allowable overbought position was at 25 percent of a bank's unimpaired capital.

The limit was tightened during the crisis to curb speculative attacks against the peso.

Tetangco said an increase in the overbought limit was possible within this year. The review, he added, would also cover a possible limitation on the amount of dollars that banks were allowed to unload through the spot foreign exchange market. Right now there is no limit on this.

"The review would include an assessment on whether we should reintroduce the oversold limit which, however, should be done over a period of time," Tetangco said.

Banks have been pushing for the liberalization of the overbought limit since early last year when portfolio and direct investments inflows started strengthening. However, they want the BSP to maintain its policy on the amount of dollars banks can unload so they could sell as much dollars as they want.

The continued increase in dollar inflows—investments, export receipts and remittances from overseas Filipino workers—had pushed the peso up to its four-year highs against the US dollar.

The average trading liquidity in the Philippine Dealing System, the spot foreign exchange market, has also improved since last year, with daily value turnover now hitting $400-$500 million from only $200-$300 million in the past years.

Foreign exchange association ACI Philippines believes that the best argument for liberalizing the overbought limit was to boost liquidity in the foreign exchange market.

Other market practitioners said the best way to ease the overbought limit would be to simply set it as a ratio of unimpaired capital and do away with the nominal threshold, which was the system before the 1997 crisis. During the early part of the crisis, the BSP imposed a nominal limit of $10 million, on top of the limit in terms of the ratio of dollar holdings to unimpaired capital. This was further lowered to $5 million at the peak of the crisis.

For 'forum shopping,' court junks case vs PPI

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE COURT OF APPEALS has dismissed "for forum shopping and for want of jurisdiction" a petition filed by a plan holder questioning the Makati Regional Trial Court's approval of Pacific Plans Inc.'s rehabilitation plan.

The decision on the said petition of plan holder Ma. Farah Z.G. Nicolas-Suchianco. was penned on Oct. 12 by Associate Justice Vicente Q. Roxas and concurred in by Associate Justices Josefina Guevara-Salonga and Apolinario D. Bruselas Jr.

This was in contrast to a ruling made by a different division of the CA on Oct. 10 which favored the petition of Parents Enabling Parents Coalition Inc. that sought the junking of the Makati RTC's decision on the PPI case.

In this case, the CA division headed by Associate Justice Japar B. Dimaampao, remanded the case back to the Makati RTC.

The CA said the petition filed by Nicolas-Suchianco was practically of the same nature as that filed by Parents Enabling Parents Coalition.

CA Justice Roxas said in the 28-page decision, "there were attempts by petitioner and the coalition company to make the several actions appear to be different. The ultimate objective, however, in all those actions, is the same, that is to dismiss the rehabilitation case filed by PPI."

He added that the "petitioner cannot be allowed to trifle with court processes. Coalition litigants cannot use their individual members as fronts to circumvent the stringent rules against forum shopping."

METRO PACIFIC INVESTMENTS

METRO PACIFIC
thinking ahead

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS OF METRO PACIFIC CORPORATION

All holders of shares of common stock of Metro Pacific Corporation (respectively, the "Shareholders" and "MPC") are hereby notified that on October 25, 2006, Metro Pacific Investments Corporation ("MPIC") filed a Tender Offer Report (SEC Form 19-1) with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") and the Philippine Stock Exchange ("PSE") pursuant to Section 19 of the Securities Regulation Code. MPIC, which is a corporation duly organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, intends to acquire up to 227,515,063 common shares of MPC.

The consideration for the acquisition of the common shares of MPC to be tendered (the "Subject Shares") is one (1) common share in MPIC (the "MPIC Shares"), plus three (3) warrants (the "Warrants") to purchase up to three (3) MPIC Shares for ₱1.00 per share, for every four (4) shares in MPC (after giving effect to the 1 for 20 reverse stock split approved by the SEC on August 23, 2006).

The Tender Offer shall commence on October 27, 2006, and end at 3:00 p.m. on November 28, 2006 (the "Tender Offer Period"). The closing or completion of the Tender Offer is conditional upon the approval by the PSE of the listing by way of introduction of the outstanding MPIC shares (including the shares to be issued pursuant to the Tender Offer) and Warrants and the listing of the underlying shares of the Warrants.

The Subject Shares are intended to be crossed on the PSE on December 8, 2006 (the "Cross Date") subject to PSE approval.

Should any of the business days during the period from October 27, 2006, the commencement of the Tender Offer Period and December 8, 2006, the Cross Date, inclusive, be officially declared a non-working holiday after the filing of the Tender Offer Report on October 25, 2006, the period shall be extended by the number of business days corresponding to those which were declared as non-working holidays.

MPIC intends to issue the MPIC Shares and Warrants as payment for the tendered and accepted Subject Shares on December 13, 2006. The said MPIC Shares and Warrants shall be made available by the Stock Transfer Agent for pick up by the tendering Shareholders after 9:00 a.m. on December 13, 2006 assuming the shares are crossed on the Cross Date.

Tendering Shareholders who hold stock certificates ("Scrip Shareholders") should submit within the Tender Offer Period their duly endorsed stock certificates, the duly accomplished Application and the following supporting documents:

	For Corporate Shareholders		For Individual Shareholders
1.	Certified true copies of the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws of the shareholder and latest amendment/s thereof.	1.	One (1) valid identification card containing the photo and specimen signature of the shareholder
2.	A notarized Secretary's Certificate substantially in the form prescribed by MPIC setting forth resolutions of the tendering shareholder's Board of Directors authorizing the tender and sale of the Company's Subject Shares and designating the signatories for the purpose.	2.	For shareholders acting through an attorney-in-fact, a duly notarized Special Power of Attorney substantially in the form prescribed by MPIC.
3.	A duly accomplished signature card containing the specimen signatures of its authorized signatories validated by the Corporate Secretary.	3.	A duly accomplished signature card containing the specimen signature of the shareholder.
4.	MPC Minority Shareholders submitting share certificates issued prior to August 23, 2006 (the effective date of the MPC reverse stock split) must endorse the same share certificates and additionally sign and submit a Stock Assignment Form for the replacement share certificate	4.	MPC Minority Shareholders submitting share certificates issued prior to August 23, 2006 (the effective date of the MPC reverse stock split) must endorse the same share certificates and additionally sign and submit a Stock Assignment Form for the replacement share certificate.
5.	MPC Minority Shareholders who have lost their share certificates must submit a notarized Affidavit of Loss and additionally sign and submit a Stock Assignment Form for the replacement share certificate	5.	MPC Minority Shareholders who have lost their share certificates must submit a notarized Affidavit of Loss and additionally sign and submit a Stock Assignment Form for the replacement share certificate.

Tendering Scrip Shareholders may submit their applications in any of the following ways:

1) Through pick-up, in which case the Tendering Shareholder should call the MPIC Tender Hotline toll-free telephone no. 1-800-10-888-0888 on or before November 24, 2006. The cost of courier services shall be borne by MPIC;

2) Delivery to ATR KimEng Securities, Inc. ("ATRKE"), 17th Floor, Tower One & Exchange Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Telephone No. (02) 849-8888 (Contact Person: Ms. Nilaida S. Enriquez or Mr. Denis G. Du).

For the convenience of Scrip Shareholders based in Visayas and Mindanao who opt to submit their Applications, the Subject Shares may be tendered by submitting the foregoing requirements at the Cebu and Davao branch offices of ATRKE not later than November 21, 2006.

ATR KimEng Securities, Inc. Cebu Branch		ATR KimEng Securities, Inc. Davao Branch
Room 208, Cebu Holdings Center		Dr. #7 M.T. Aquino Building
Cebu Business Park Cebu City		Cabaguio Avenue Corner Bolcan Street, Davao City
Telephone No.: (032) 231-1324		Telephone No : (082) 224-2860
Contact Person: Cheryl M. Lim-Go		Contact Person: Miguel Luis R. Aquino

ATRKE will submit the share certificates for validation to Stock Transfer Services Inc, the stock transfer agent of MPC. Defective applications (*e.g.*, with discrepancy between the specimen signatures on file and the endorsement) must be corrected within the Tender Offer Period to avoid being rejected by MPIC. Hence, Shareholders are strongly urged against tendering at the last minute to allow sufficient time to correct any deficiency in their application. Shareholders are also urged to indicate their telephone numbers in their respective application forms to allow ATRKE to inform them immediately of any deficiency in their applications.

Tendering Shareholders whose shares are lodged with the Philippine Central Depository Nominee Corporation ("PCD") ("Scripless Shareholders") should instruct their brokers to electronically transfer their shares to ATRKE for receipt by ATRKE prior to 3.00 p.m. of November 28, 2006. ATRKE shall hold the tendered common shares only as custodian.

Tendering Shareholders shall have the right to withdraw any tendered shares at any time during the Tender Offer Period. For a withdrawal to be effective, a written notice of withdrawal must be received by ATRKE before 3.00 p.m. of November 28, 2006.

Copies of SEC Form 19-1 may be obtained by Shareholders from ATRKE at their addresses stated above.

For inquiries about MPIC or the Tender Offer, please dial the MPIC Tender Hotline at toll-free telephone no. 1-800-10-888-0888.

Pay TV piracy in RP remains high

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AN ADVOCACY GROUP. REPRESENTING cable firms in the Asia-Pacific said Philippine cable companies were facing an uphill battle against pay television piracy, with the cost of rights infringement remaining at about $80 million yearly.

According to the Cable & Satellite Broadcasting Association of Asia or CASBAA, there are "few signs of improvement" in the country as illegal pay-TV subscribers have increased to about 887,500, as shown in its Pay-TV Piracy Report 2006.

The report indicated that the number of illegal distributors in the country rose 29.3 percent to 187,000, although the so-called individual taps decreased by 14.9 percent to 400,000.

It added that subscriber base underdeclaration among cable operators increased by 36.4 percent to 300,000.

CASBAA said the cost of piracy in the entire region—referring to 11 markets surveyed—amounted to $187 million, representing $127 million in taxes on corporate profits and $31 million in value added tax or gross sales tax.

Some $38 million in taxes, it said, were being diverted away from the Philippines' government coffers, which was the second-biggest loss after Thailand's $59 million.

Interestingly, relatively developed Australia is losing $14 million in revenues while Vietnam is being robbed of $12 million.

Piracy in the Philippines accounts for 17 percent of the regional total, estimated at 5.3 million illegal connections.

CASBAA said the estimated net piracy cost due to illegal distributors rose by 24 percent this year.

The report was conducted in collaboration with CASBAA member organizations while the Creative Industries Division of Standard Chartered--specializing in the media & entertainment sector-helped in the validation of the findings.

In 2006, the total net piracy cost for the Asia-Pacific reached $1.13 billion or 6.9 percent higher than last year's $1.06 billion.

This year, CASBAA has undertaken lobbying of governments in numerous markets and continued with legal actions against piracy and the commercial distribution of unauthorized signals in bars and clubs.

Gov't rejects offers for HGC bonds

STATE-OWNED HOME GUARANTY CORP. failed to sell P12 billion worth of zero-coupon bonds yesterday as the government's auction committee rejected all bids for being too high.

In an interview after the auction attempt, HGC president Gonzalo Bongolan said the bids for the seven-year peso bonds, benchmarked against the fixed rate Treasury notes (FXTN) of the same tenor, were "unacceptable."

Banking sources said about P23 billion was offered at an average rate of 7 percent versus the FXTN rate of 7.6 percent. But the sources said the government intended to award the bonds at lower than 7 percent.

Bongolan said HGC would make another attempt to sell these peso-denominated bonds, whose proceeds were intended for the expansion of its socialized housing guarantee operations, within the year.

GOV'T REJECTS/ B7

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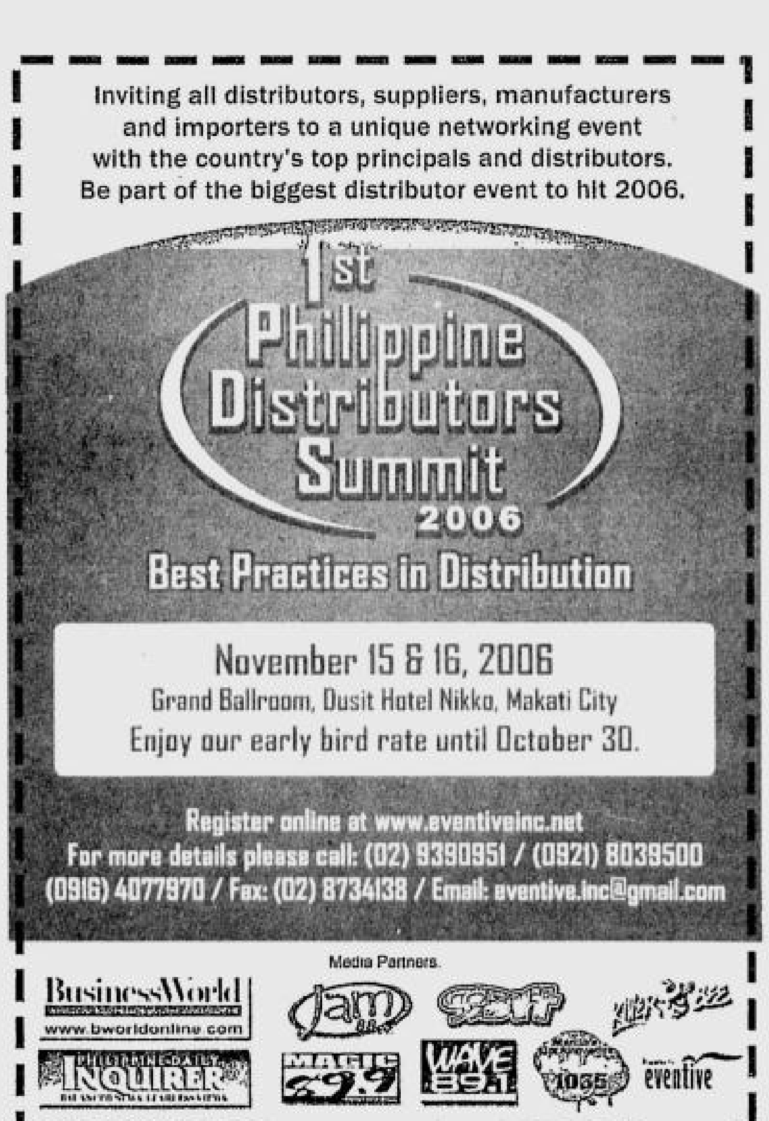
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Pharma sector urged to cut cost of medicine

THE GOVERNMENT HAS RENEWED ITS call on the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors to help in providing the public with quality medicines at affordable prices.

In a press briefing, Dr. Esperanza Cabral, social welfare and development secretary, said heart and vascular diseases continued to top the list of the 10 leading causes of deathin the country. She expressed concern over trends that showed that some 17.4 percent of the total population could be afflicted with hypertension, the primary indicator of cardio-vascular disorder.

Cabral said the prevalence of cardio-vascular disease-related deaths was due to "poor patient compliance with the required treatment for such ailments."

The poor patient compliance can be blamed on the "prohibitive cost of medicines for these diseases," she pointed out.

Cabral said less than 10 percent of Filipino hypertensive patients adequately treated. The majority of the patients, she added, were "walking around with uncontrolled blood pressure and may be considered as walking time bombs due to the high risk of developing heart attacks, strokes and similar complications," she added.

A World Health Organization (WHO) study also showed that only 2 out of 10 Filipinos have access to essential drugs.

According to Cabral, the cooperation of the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors is "crucial to the effort to improve the access of Filipinos to high-quality and affordable medicine."

Cabral also cited the planned introduction by a United Laboratories Inc. (Unilab) division of an anti-hypertension treatment called Amvasc, which would be sold at 60 percent less than the price of available medicines of this type.

INSULAR LIFE posts strong financial performance

INSULAR LIFE, the largest Filipino life insurance company, posted a consolidated net income of P1.46 billion last year, 20% higher than the 2004 level of P1.21 billion.

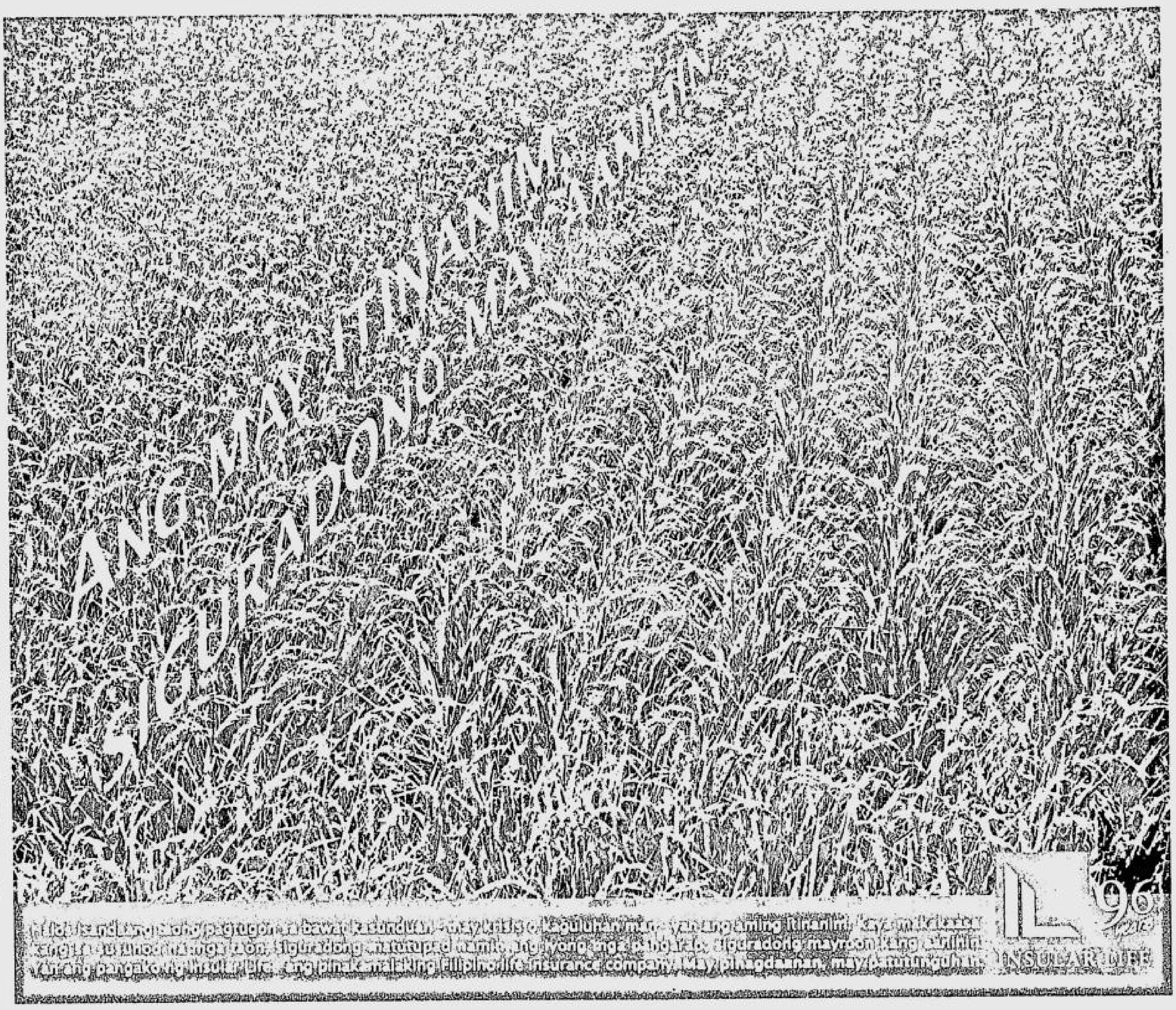
The healthy results are attributed to higher returns on invested assets, improved matching of investments to product liabilities, higher dividend income from a strong portfolio of equity investments, administrative cost savings from a more efficient customer servicing platform, and improved production from alternative distribution channels.

Insular Life's financial stability and 95-year record of delivering on its contractual commitments, have enabled the company to withstand the widespread erosion of public confidence in certain financial institutions that was brought about by the difficulties of leading pre-need companies.

Despite the political turmoil and difficult economic conditions in 2005, Insular Life generated gross premiums of P7.2 billion, which was comparable to 2004 results. Total revenues stood at P10 billion on the back of premium income and strong investment performance, which improved by 21% to P2.9 billion. Meanwhile, benefit payments to policyholders increased by 5% to P4.1 billion. Total assets increased by P1.8 billion, from P42.2 billion to P44.0 billion. Members' equity improved by P2.7 billion, from P6.8 billion in 2004 to P9.5 billion by end 2005.

Recently, the company was among the lenders that extended a P4.5 billion loan to port operator International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI). Likewise, Insular Life, through its investment house, Insular Investment and Trust Corporation, was tapped as one of only seven (7) financial institutions that underwrote the P5.8 billion fund-raising of Ayala Corporation.

Insular Life was also adjudged as the Gold Awardee for the second consecutive year, 2005 and 2006, under the insurance category by the Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brand Survey. Insular Life scored high in the survey's quantitative and qualitative scores, performing clearly above other brands in the insurance category. It placed ahead of competitors as more respondents identified Insular Life as their life insurance company of choice. On the other hand, the Company earned consumers' nod in six key brand values: Quality, Value, Trustworthiness, Strong Image, Understanding of Customer Needs, and Innovativeness.



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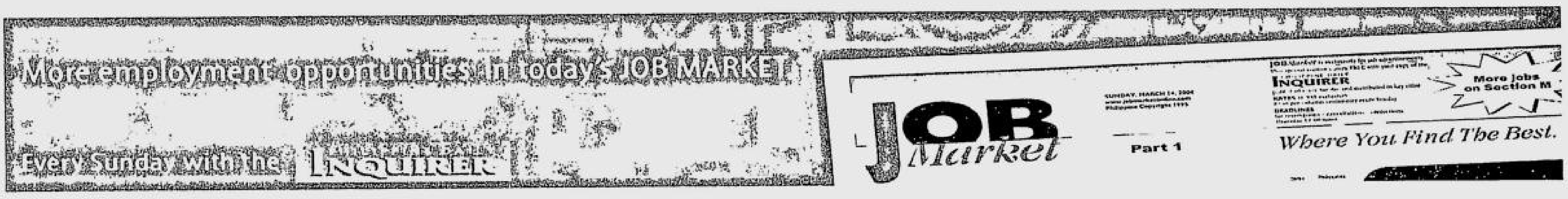

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ABS-CBN gags itself

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

BOTH ABS-CBN AND KORINA SANCHEZ had very much wanted to rectify the Cocktales' Monday report that the top news anchor had agreed to apologize to ABS-CBN news and current affairs chief Maria Ressa.

The intended message was supposed to have been something along this line—no apology is forthcoming or even contemplated because there is nothing to apologize for.

But the ABS-CBN statement was never issued, because the issuance would apparently violate the network's own policy prohibiting staffers, officials and even board members from disclosing or even confirming details of such delicate items such as ongoing management-personnel discussion.

In short, ABS-CBN has adopted a gag rule, and has elected to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous leakers and mischievous columnists.

Except for that apology angle, we are happy to note that the two previous columns on Korina and the Tres Marias and, more important than the personalities involved, on how the network's editorial parameters are being challenged and refreshed given the demands of the times, have generally been on the ball.

Buyers dictate

THE KUOK/SHANGRI-LA Group has decided to adopt the Hong Kong style of pricing for their penthouse units in St. Francis Towers in Ortigas, letting potential buyers make their respective best offers rather than the developer posting an indicative price.

In other words, the customers will bid for each of the eight, tri-level penthouses, and he who submits the best offer gets the right to buy.

To test the market, the Kuok/Shangri-La Group has released only one of the eight penthouses of the twin towers for sale.

Aside from being the country's highest condo unit on the country's tallest building, at 60 floors, the penthouse attraction includes a 600-square-meter floor area, an infinity pool with sky deck, an air-conditioned sky lounge, a jacuzzi and walk-in closet in the master's bathroom, six-meter high ceiling in the living area, and panoramic views all around the unit.

Money-go-round

- PAL has deployed its spanking new Airbus 319-100 to the Singapore route, where its four-seat Business class section configuration is likely to prove inadequate to meet higher demand, given the increasing intra-regional business travel.
- RAMON "Monchoy" Garcia, who is still abroad, wrote to say he would press insider trading charges against his elder brother Antonio for having personally acquired the 26-percent Tomen block in the listed LMG Chemicals despite Chemphil having the right of first refusal on the Japanese shareholdings.

Not only did Antonio kept Chemphil in the dark about the Tomen sale, he acquired the block for only $50,000, Monchoy said. Antonio was able to execute the alleged rigged sale because he was both Chemphil and LMG Chemicals chair.

Heard through the grapevine

MIKE ARROYO helicoptered with his famous wife to play golf at The Country Club on Sunday afternoon, with the usual complement of Presidential Security Guards, a fire truck and an ambulance accompanying the First Couple.

Tuesday morning, the First Gentleman returned to the golf course in an unmarked vehicle, bringing along this time a hush-hush golf buddy and a few bodyguards.

(Email: cocktales@cocktales.biz)

GSIS taps PLDT for paperless services

GSIS president Winston Garcia (right), with PLDT president Napoleon L. Nazareno and senior vice president Ernesto R. Alberto (left) test the G-W@PS kiosk at the Camiguin Provincial Center.

THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE System has tapped Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. to provide some 1.5 million government workers nationwide with a more accessible, paperless and faster means of transacting with the pension fund.

Called the Wireless Automated Processing System or G-W@PS, it combines different technologies—including radio frequency identification (FID), biometrics, general packet radio service (GPRS), short message service (SMS) and a virtual private network (VPN)—to process local applications in a completely paperless environment.

The GSIS is investing about P70 million to put up 3,000 unmanned G-W@PS kiosks throughout the country by 2007. These kiosks will enable the GSIS to serve its members anywhere in the Philippines efficiently and without any red tape.

GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia yesterday launched the system on Camiguin Island in Northern Mindanao.

Garcia said that by establishing the new state-of-the-art loan processing system, the GSIS was fulfilling its promise to "leave no stone unturned" in delivering services and assistance to its members with the least red tape and as fast as possible.

Prior to this, simply getting a loan from the GSIS involved a tedious process. The member had to go a servicing GSIS office, bring identification and application papers that bear the approval of the administrative officer of the employer. The GSIS counter personnel then checks the member's qualifications to apply for a loan, computes the amount allowed and then ask the applicant to sign a computation of the loan proceeds. Only will the application be processed.

Under the system, all the GSIS member has to do is to go to a G-W@PS kiosk which will process all the information needed for the application.

"What the system does is to eliminate the need for the member to cover great distance and spend money for his travel and accommodations just to get a loan from GSIS. Now its not the member that goes to GSIS for loan assistance, it is the GSIS that goes to the member to extend the help he needs," said Garcia.

"PLDT is happy to support this project that would benefit a million and a half GSIS members who now don't have to go directly to GSIS offices for simple transactions," PLDT president Napoleon L. Nazareno said in a statement. *Riza Olchondra and Abigail L. Ho*

Metrobank to auction P8B worth of soured loans

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

METROPOLITAN BANK AND TRUST CO. IS selling some P8 billion in bad loans through a bidding process today at the bank's head office in Makati, bank chair Antonio S. Abacan said following the bank's listing of additional common shares yesterday.

The bank is targeting the sale of at least P11 billion in soured assets this year.

Metrobank recently completed a global share offer of 173.6 million new shares at P38 each, raising some $132 million or P6.6 billion for the bank. President Macapagal-Arroyo officiated the ringing of the bell at the opening of trading to mark the bank's listing yesterday.

Metrobank closed P4.50 or 11-percent higher at P45.50 a share yesterday from its previous close of P41.

At the same time, Metrobank president Arthur Ty said the bank was targeting to get 25 percent of the remittance market in the Middle East by setting up offices there.

Metrobank has been exploring tie-ups with foreign remittance companies and studying international branch locations to boost market coverage.

During the first half of 2006, total transactions coursed through Metrobank's international channels hit $1.4 billion.

Metrobank has 69 international branches, remittance offices, partnerships, and tie-ups in the Middle East (27), Asia Pacific (20), Europe (10), and in the Americas (12). The bank is present in Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Shanghai in the Asia Pacific region.

The bank also enjoys strong presence in Europe with remittance offices in London, Rome, Milan, Bologna, Madrid, Barcelona and Vienna. In the United States, Metrobank is present in New York, Hawaii, New Jersey, Chicago, and the Bahamas. Only recently, it opened its first remittance office in Canada. It has established partnerships with more 1,000 correspondent banks worldwide.

Stock rally slowing down

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.16-PERCENT higher yesterday, supported by gains in index heavyweight Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., dealers said.

They said the market appeared to be taking a breather although investor sentiment remains positive in anticipation of strong quarterly earnings and following Wall Street's gains overnight.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 4.22 points to 2,682.94 after moving between 2,672.43 and 2,697.86.

It was the index's best finish since Aug. 6, 1997, when it settled at 2,694.79. The broader all-share index rose 6.36 points to 1,651.24.

Losers led gainers 63 to 42, with 51 unchanged. Turnover totaled 2.08 billion shares worth P4.05 billion.

"The market opened strongly on sustained momentum, but it encountered resistance near the 2,700-point level. A technical correction seems to be underway," said Rommel Macapagal of Westlink Global Equities. *AFP*

Peso rallies to 49.88 to a dollar

From page B1

"It's driven by the decision of the Monetary Board to take advantage of the situation. When we prepay we can reduce our foreign exchange liabilities and save in the process, so this is driven by external debt management considerations," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

This developed as strong portfolio investments, on top of inflows from overseas Filipino workers, perked up the local currency as well as the Philippine Stock Exchange.

At the spot foreign exchange market Philippine Dealing System, the peso gained 7.5 centavos to close at its intra-day high of 49.88 from Tuesday's 49.955 against the dollar.

The peso thus revisited the year's peak of 49.88 last hit on Oct. 3.

The local currency was also supported by the bullish sentiment in the region, given expectations that the US Federal Reserve Board would keep its key overnight interest rates unchanged.

ING Bank economist Joey Cuyegkeng yesterday said the peso had some more room to appreciate, even after gaining about 6 percent so far this year.

Last April, the BSP prepaid $500 million worth of debts and another $460 million was settled earlier this month.

The BSP's latest tranche of debt prepayment would be done by November, Tetangco said.

Tetangco estimated the annual savings arising from the three prepayments at $32 million.

Guinigundo noted that the BSP enjoyed the flexibility to retire debts ahead of maturity as most of its debts were in the form of loan contracts rather than bond floats.

Exporters welcomed the BSP's decision to prepay more debts as the resulting outflows would temper the currency's strong appreciation, but they said more should be done—such as the beefing up of the foreign reserves and making more debt prepayments.

"There is room for more prepayments. It makes sense because it's cheaper for (the BSP)," Sergio Ortiz-Luis, chair of the Philippine Confederation of Exporters, said yesterday.

Ortiz-Luis noted that while the sector was appreciative of the BSP's dollar purchases and subsequent debt prepayments, the government must also speed up efforts to create an export development fund to help the export sector upgrade product quality, design, packaging and global marketing.

He said the Department of Trade and Industry was willing to chip in P100 million into the fund while the private sector could only contribute a "token" amount.

But Guinigundo said the peso remained competitive against other currencies in the region. "While the peso has continued to strengthen particularly in the past week, other Asian currencies have strengthened more," Guinigundo said.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 26, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	36,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	44	44.5	44	44.5	3,359,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	63	63.5	62.5	63	4,179,800
China Banking Corp.	670	670	670	670	4,750
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.42	4,040,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	71	71.5	70	70.5	59,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44	46	44	45.5	14,079,500
Philippine National Bank	35	36	35	36	43,500
Phil. Savings Bank	46	46	46	46	1,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	19.5	19.5	19	19.5	76,500
Security Bank Corp.	59	59.5	58.5	59.5	105,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	45	45.5	45	45.5	36,100
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	403,000
First Abacus Financial	0.58	0.58	0.5	0.5	410,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1595	1600	1595	1600	1,580
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.12	378,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	243	243	243	243	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1975	1990	1975	1980	1,330
Ivantage Corp.	1.44	1.48	1.42	1.48	6,758,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	56	57	55.5	55.5	1,055,600
First Phil Hldgs Corp	54	54.5	53	53	385,400
Manila Electric Co. A	27	27	25.5	26.5	405,900
Manila Electric Co. B	31.5	32	30	30.5	1,768,500
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.2	9.2	9.1	9.1	2,294,000
Petron Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.15	4,216,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	3,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1	1	1	1	14,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.35	3.35	14,000
Cadp Group Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.28	2.28	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc	21.75	21.75	21.25	21.5	72,800
Jollibee Foods Corp.	42	42.5	41.5	41.5	699,100
Rfm Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.06	2,530,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	50,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	200,000
San Miguel Corp. A	66	66.5	66	66.5	81,200
San Miguel Corp. B	74	75	73	74	1,048,100
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.12	3	2.12	3	26,000
Universal Robina Corp.	20.25	20.25	19.75	19.75	2,865,600
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.51	0.55	0.49	0.55	45,250,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.75	2.9	4,027,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	2.1	2.14	2.1	2.14	377,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5.8	6	5.8	5.9	6,820,000
Republic Cement Corp.	2.42	2.65	2.38	2.65	1,076,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.4	5.5	5.1	5.2	1,924,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	100,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	100,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.72	0.73	0.7	0.71	96,300,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.175	0.18	0.17	0.17	4,840,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	10,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	47,000,000
Ayala Corp.	500	500	497.5	500	1,226,460
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.55	0.58	0.55	0.58	260,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	6	6.2	5.9	6.1	3,387,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc	0.043	0.055	0.043	0.055	418,900,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.55	2.6	3,042,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.25	0.26	2,370,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.91	270,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	35,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3	3.15	2.95	2.95	256,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	101,000
Benpres Holdings Corp	1.44	1.52	1.44	1.5	42,898,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	4.95	5.1	4.9	4.95	5,769,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.75	2.8	255,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.84	1.92	1.84	1.88	5,575,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.1	7.8	7.9	1,512,000
Keppel Holdings	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	102,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.39	0.34	0.37	1,270,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	2.26	2.26	2.12	2.12	73,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.74	1.76	4,602,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	13,700,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.82	0.82	190,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	6,520,000
SM Investments Corp.	280	282.5	280	282.5	217,320
South China Resources Inc	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	350,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	91,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	1,500,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.135	0.12	0.135	1,130,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	15	15.25	14.75	15	25,247,500
Belle Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.14	3,650,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.52	1.58	1.4	1.58	519,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.43	0.45	0.42	0.42	7,280,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	2,068,000
C & P Homes Inc	1.54	1.72	1.46	1.72	1,426,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	5,250,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.57	18,200,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	1,575,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	3,700,000
Filinvest Land Inc	1.8	1.8	1.72	1.76	21,825,000
Interport Res.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	49,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	11,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	2,730,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.83	0.83	440,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.22	2.22	2.12	2.18	39,131,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.42	2.48	3,330,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.32	0.34	430,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.195	17,600,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	14.75	15.25	14.75	15.25	1,596,400
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42	2,060,000
SM Development Corp.	1.88	1.88	1.86	1.88	275,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	9	9	8.9	8.9	26,236,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.6	0.63	0.6	0.63	280,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	720,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	20.5	21	20.25	21	998,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1	1	1	1	20,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.56	8,936,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1130	1130	1120	1130	29,600
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	5.1	5.1	4.95	5	4,499,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2290	2290	2285	2285	233,000
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Diversified Fin. Network	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	20,000
Imperial Res	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	12,900,000
Ionics Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.88	1.9	528,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.046	0.049	0.046	0.049	5,700,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.06	0.065	0.06	0.065	18,600,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.28	1.28	1.22	1.22	130,000
Philweb Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.032	29,700,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.1	4.15	4.1	4.15	205,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	20	20	19.75	20	150,400
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	1	1	0.98	0.98	160,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	5	5	5	5	466,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.34	2.34	2.28	2.28	9,875,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	19,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.52	2,160,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	6,000
Ipeople Inc	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	25,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	3	3	3	3	3,000
Macroasia Corp .	1.96	2	1.96	2	1,417,000
Paxys Inc.	14.5	14.5	14	14.25	239,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.5	1,682,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.6	691,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	158,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.2	8.2	8	8	1,495,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	11,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.245	0.245	0.24	0.24	13,200,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	7,920,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	424,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.023	70,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0095	0.0095	0.009	0.0095	237,000,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.7	3.7	9,441,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	19	19.25	18.75	19	393,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	670,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.66	0.69	0.66	0.69	1,410,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	2,490,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	27,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.97	0.97	0.96	0.96	950,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	120,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	152,000

CURRENCIES

October 26, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.793273	1.000000	50.0120
Japan	Yen	0.006664	0.008401	0.4202
United Kingdom	Pound	1.489767	1.878000	93.9225
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.101941	0.128507	6.4269
Switzerland	Franc	0.627490	0.791014	39.5602
Canada	Dollar	0.705006	0.888731	44.4472
Singapore	Dollar	0.505109	0.636740	31.8446
Australia	Dollar	0.602974	0.760109	38.0146
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.104284	2.652661	132.6649
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.211709	0.266880	13.3472
Brunei	Dollar	0.503505	0.634719	31.7436
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000109	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.021387	0.026961	1.3484
UAE	Dirham	0.215992	0.272279	13.6172
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.260600	63.0451
Argentina	Peso	0.256723	0.323625	16.1851
Brazil	Real	0.369256	0.465484	23.2798
Denmark	Kroner	0.134189	0.169159	8.4600
India	Rupee	0.017519	0.022085	1.1045
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215915	0.272183	13.6124
Mexico	New Peso	0.073807	0.093041	4.6532
New Zealand	Dollar	0.524339	0.660982	33.0570
Norway	Kroner	0.120350	0.151713	7.5875
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013097	0.016510	0.8257
South Africa	Rand	0.104791	0.132100	6.6066
Korea	Won	0.000830	0.001046	0.0523
Sweden	Kroner	0.108517	0.136797	6.8415
Syria	Pound	0.015282	0.019264	0.9634
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023833	0.030044	1.5026
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000370	0.000466	0.0233

PNOC unit to go public next month

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE (PSE) has approved an application by state-owned geothermal power producer PNOC-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) to raise as much as P14 billion from a public listing by Dec. 12, which could make it this year's biggest initial public offering (IPO), industry sources said.

PSE president Francis Lim said PNOC-EDC would offer 4.2-5.2 billion primary and secondary (previously owned) shares to the public, representing 28 to 35 percent of the company's outstanding capital stock.

The lead underwriters are BDO Capital for the local offering and CLSA for the international issue.

Lim said the company would use the proceeds from the IPO to build new geothermal plants and for working capital.

The offer period is set for the middle of next month.

"This is good for the country to support capital market development and it is consistent with the government's privatization program," Lim said yesterday.

Sources said that P1.5 billion of the proceeds from the IPO would be used for working capital, P935 million for new drilling rigs and the rehabilitation of two rigs, and the rest for the development of five steamfields.

PNOC-EDC generates roughly P7 billion in net income a year.

PNOC-EDC operates geothermal energy projects on the islands of Leyte, Luzon, Negros and Mindanao with a total installed capacity of 1,148 megawatts. It is also the sole active developer of geothermal energy and geothermal power projects in the country and accounts for about 60 percent of the total installed geothermal energy capacity in the Philippines.

PRULINK — **PRU LIFE U.K.**

Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Oct. 24, 2006	Last Week Oct. 17, 2006
Bond Fund - Peso	1.52641	1.51874
Managed Fund - Peso	1.70420	1.68567
Growth Fund - Peso	1.42230	1.38667
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.3189	1.3150

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

INSULAR LIFE Wealth Builder and Wealth Secure

Investment Funds of Wealth Builder & Wealth Secure

	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
	Oct. 23, 2006	Oct. 16, 2006
Fixed Income Fund	1.212448	1.207032
Balanced Fund	1.238570	1.230552
Equity Fund	1.301837	1.289527

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

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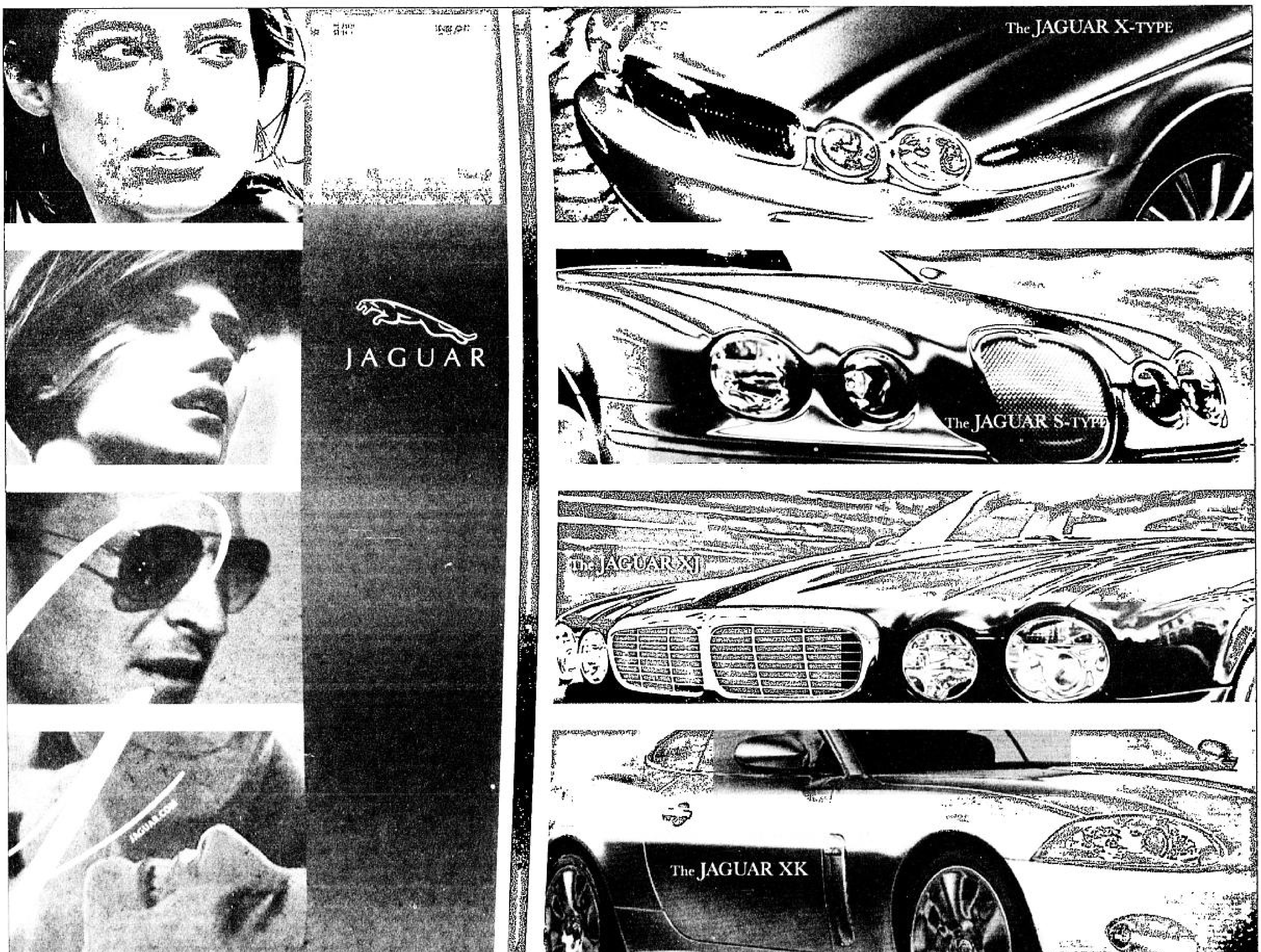
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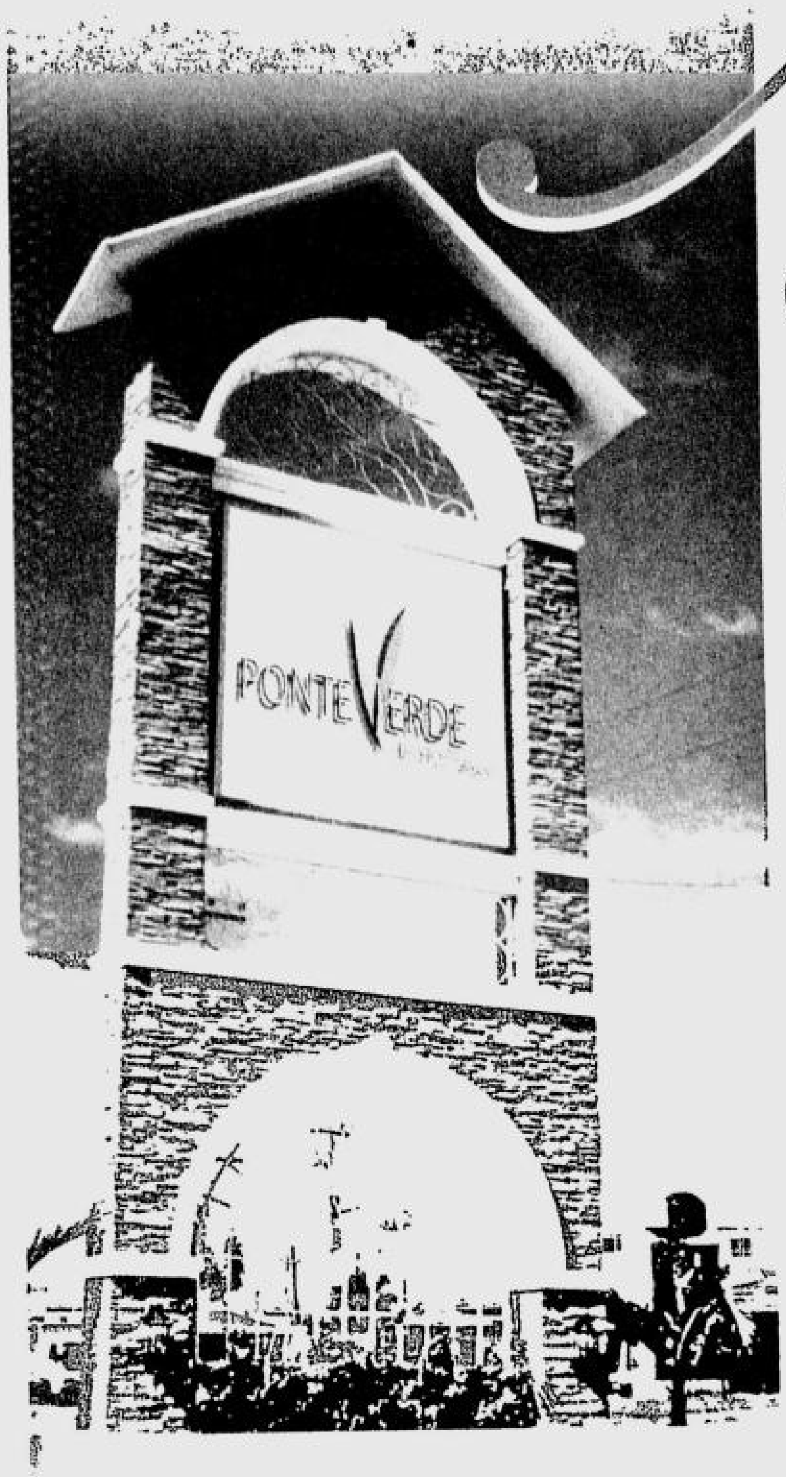

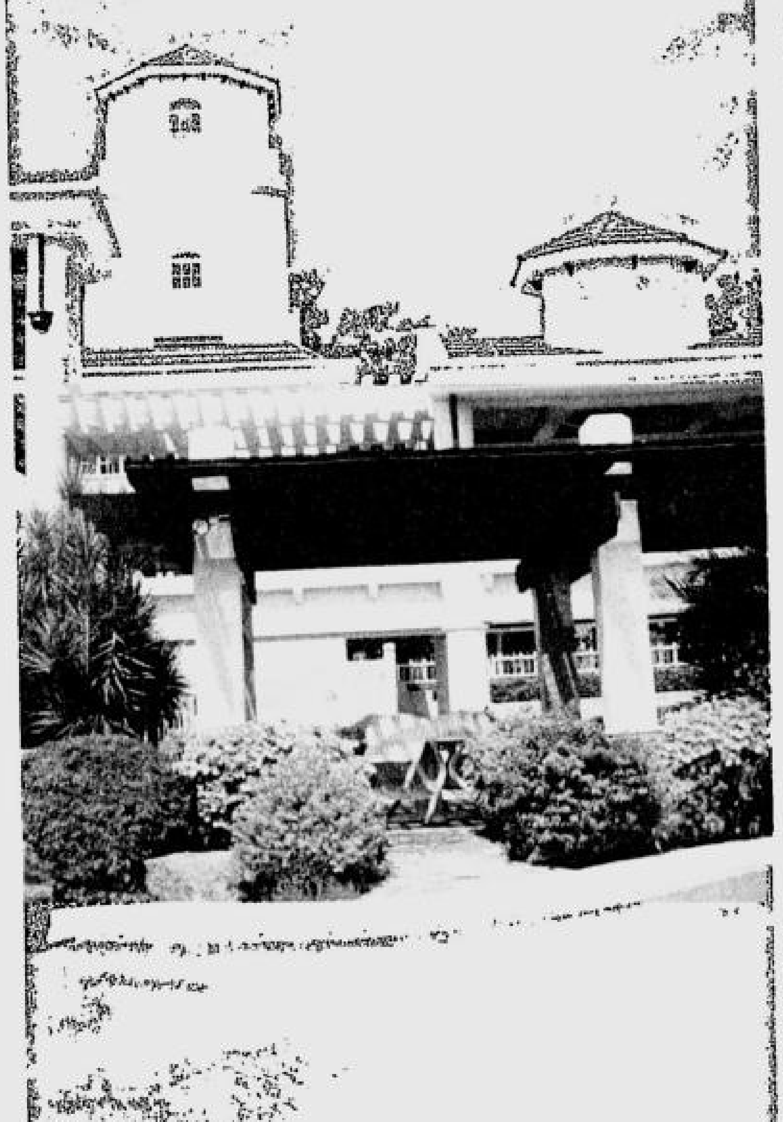

PONTE VERDE
DE STO. TOMAS

A Sta. Lucia Property down south

Dream homes are built, first, in your hearts then in a secured environment. Building a dream home is a rewarding endeavor and because it makes you happy to design and build your house to suit your taste and lifestyle, it's not as difficult as it seems. The harder part is to find the perfect community where you can be confident to grow your family and nurture a career or business. With more attractive options of well-conceptualized communities now, you can just buy a piece of property where you build your dream home as if buying a piece of furniture.

This has been Sta. Lucia Property's credo ever since—to build communities where you can build your dream homes. Considered as the best residential developer in the country, Sta. Lucia builds communities that will make future homeowners be proud of the neighborhood they belong to. They partner with the best contractors who implement the latest in construction systems, has the best experts in the field, use only the top-of-the-line materials and deliver on time that's why clients are assured of hassle-free property ownership at any Sta. Lucia Development. These are just a few reasons why Sta. Lucia's achievements in property development have never been surpassed by their competitions in the industry.

Christine "Tintin" Bersola-Babao, Sta. Lucia's newest spokesperson, has proven Sta. Lucia's credibility when it comes to community building. Her husband bought a 300-sqm property made by the developer as one of his wedding gifts to her in 2003. When they moved in to their house in that community, she admitted that it became a dream home because the environment was perfect for them—quiet, secured and accessible. When their daughter Antonia was born, her husband bought the adjacent 600-sqm vacant property in preparation for a bigger family.

"Living in a Sta. Lucia property makes me look forward to going home. Whatever traffic or business outside, when you enter a Sta. Lucia property, it's like a whole new world. I know I have a beautiful community that is safe and secured that's why my husband and I don't worry about raising our family here," said the bubbly TV personality.

Now, Sta. Lucia intends not just to satisfy their clientele with master-planned communities; it also introduces its future homeowners to a new culture of lifestyle. Its new project, the Ponte Verde de Sto. Tomas in Batangas, is one of the newest offerings that will redefine family living in a Sta. Lucia property. Following the success of Club Morocco in Subic, Pinewoods in Baguio, Orchard Golf & Residential Estates and Eagle Ridge in Cavite, Sta. Lucia envisions Ponte Verde to become a big success as well.

"We are very optimistic of the growth potential of Sto. Tomas, Batangas that is why we are also eager to bring forth Ponte Verde Residential Estates to its people. Sta. Lucia Realty, backed with its three decades of experience in real-estate development, aims to make Ponte Verde the new landmark of residential luxury. We would want our clients to be a part of a quality investment that would last for generations to come", says Matilde Robles, President of Royale Homes Marketing Corporation, exclusive marketing arm for Ponte Verde.

Sprawling on prime property of 35 hectares of land, the Ponte Verde de Sto. Tomas will become the future most significant landmark of the progressive city in the south. The area is accessible from Manila through the Philippine-Japan Friendship (Maharlika) Highway and is linked to the proposed Batangas International Port and neighboring towns, cities and provinces through well-paved road networks.

Ponte Verde is located within the bustling city of Sto. Tomas. It is near and within proximity of important establishments, government offices, educational institutions, churches and historical and cultural landmarks in the city.

The property will be divided into themed, landscaped villages with pocket parks, playgrounds, picnic grounds, clubhouses, and other facilities that will create venues for families to spend quality time together with the whole neighborhood. It is envisioned to become a gated community where families will comfortably live in style, elegance and security.

Ponte Verde will let you enjoy an active lifestyle through several leisure amenities for homeowners. Walk down or jog around landscaped nature trails and wide roads inside the villages, spend weekends in picnic grounds with your kids and dogs, or indulge in your favorite sports in clubhouses of each village. With interconnected villages, your options are limitless.

Intended for local residents of Sto. Tomas; migrants from nearby municipalities of Tanauan, Calamba, Malvar and Lipa; middle-income employees of the rising industrial zones within the area; and OFWs within Sto. Tomas and nearby municipalities, the Ponte Verde property is also a good second home option for Manila residents who would want to experience breathing fresh air and living in a community sans the noise of the city every once in a while. It can also be a nice retirement home for parents of workaholic young professionals in Manila because of the peaceful, secured neighborhood and lush greenery.

Soon to be a thriving community amidst a highly industrialized area, living in Ponte Verde will provide you the same comfort of living in the metropolis. Provisions for cable TV and telephone line connections will be provided while uninterrupted water and power supply is assured.

The property is also envisioned to be home to a multi-purpose country club that will be the first of its kind in the area. The club will have leisure facilities that will surely make it a byword in the industry. At the club, you will experience utmost leisure exclusivity while communing with nature using state-of-the-art facilities.

Ponte Verde property will have three phases of residential development with a total of 1,410 lots. The initial selling price per square meter is P3,000 for the first 200 lots.

Ponte Verde de Sto. Tomas is located in Sto.Tomas, Batangas. For more information, please call its exclusive marketing network, Royale Homes Marketing Corporation, at (02) 7234014/7264288/7264205 or log on to www.royalehomes.com.ph.

Acid body a magnet for sickness

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

OUR FARMERS AND FISHERFOLK PRODUCE the food we need. But if we do not take the right food, we get sick instead of healthy. While it is important that we have food, it is equally important that we know which food to eat.

I once participated in a six-day health and wellness seminar in Massachusetts, United States conducted by Micho Kushi, the Microbiotic Diet founder. It showed the alternative eastern way of restoring and maintaining health, as compared to the western method that often relies heavily on drugs.

Since my grandfather was a medical doctor trained in Madrid and my father a cardiologist trained in the Sorboune in Paris and Columbia in New York, I was warned that the eastern way did not have the western scientific rigor to justify their alternative methods.

With these warnings, I attended the seminar with much skepticism. Fortunately, Kushi's son, who had recently graduated with a PhD in Nutrition from Harvard University, was at the same seminar. He showed me several issues of the New England Journal of Medicine, which contained scientific studies that supported several eastern medicine prescriptions.

For example, giving great emphasis to diet and discouraging frequent red meat consumption was proven correct. A published graph showed that when red meat was eaten two or three times a day, the incidence of sicknesses such as cancer, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and internal organ malfunctioning was quite high. This incidence progressively decreased as red meat consumption decreased. It reached a stable low level when meat was eaten only two or three times a week.

Still skeptical, I asked: "Why is my 82-year old mother, who has always eaten meat twice or thrice a day, still very healthy?" Dr. Kushi replied: "That's because she probably has very little stress, which allows her body to efficiently get rid of the potentially harmful elements of red meat."

Dr. Kushi continued: "But since most of us in today's environment encounter a high level of stress, our bodies lose this efficiency. Therefore, we must choose the right food if we wish to stay healthy."

Acid-alkaline balance

We often hear the traditional advice that we should eat more fruits and vegetables, cut down on meat and sweets, get good exercise, and improve our lifestyles. However, I have never associated this with our bodies acid-alkaline balance, commonly referred to as pH (potential Hydrogen). The acid-alkaline continuum ranges from 0 to 14—with 7 as neutral, below 7 as acid and above 7 as alkaline. Research by Edgar Cayce shows that a balanced-pH with a slight alkaline tendency is beneficial for most individuals.

Below is a table that shows what contributes to an alkaline versus an acid body in food, emotions, exercise, and lifestyle.

	ALKALINE	ACID
FOOD	Most vegetables Most Fruits	All Animal Protein Most Sugars and Sweets
EMOTIONS	Love and Gratitude Calm Physical Unity with Loved One	Anger Hate Tension
EXERCISE	Walks in Nature Yoga	No reported research
LIFESTYLE	Meditation and Prayer Getting a Massage	Fighting Stress

Food component

In the area of food, Energize for Life Resources states: "It is no coincidence that the rapidly growing numbers of cancer, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes correlate almost exactly with the rising consumption of acid-forming foods such as sugars, saturated fats and white breads."

Dr. William Howard Hay states: "We depart from health in just the proportion to which we have allowed our alkalies to be dissipated by the introduction of acid-forming food in too great an amount... It may seem strange to say that all disease is the same thing, no matter what its myriad modes of expression, but it is verily so."

Dr. Theodore E. Baroody states: "The countless names of illnesses do not really matter. What does matter is they all come from the same source... too much acid waste in the body."

Lemon

Lemon is one of the most potent sources of alkalies to combat too much acidity because it has a large percentage of alkaline salts. Though lemon may taste acidic at first, when utilized in the body, its natural fruit acids increase significantly the alkalinity of the blood. However, the lemon must be taken in its fresh form because processed lemon becomes more acidic than alkaline.

Since both bacteria and viruses grow best in an acidic environment, taking lemon is a very powerful way of converting this acid state into an alkaline one, which helps prevent the germs' growth. Thus, lemon performs both preventive and curative functions.

I personally know of numerous instances when people found freshly squeezed lemon in a glass of water very effective in curing illnesses such as acidic stomach disorders, coughs and colds, and other ailments.

For more information on acid-alkaline balance, and lemon's positioning in this balance, please visit http://www.naturalhealthschool.com/acid-alkaline.html

(*The author is Agriwatch chair. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8522112*)

Ad spending on radio up 17% to ₱12B in first half

Television, print advertisers shifting

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SPENDING ON RADIO ADVERTISING in the first half of the year jumped 17 percent to P11.95 billion, as more advertisers shifted from television and print to radio given more accurate audience measurements on this medium, according to research firm Nielsen Media Research.

Mark Neely, company regional director, said one such method was the diary, which supplanted the older means of coincidental and recall surveys that the local firms had held on to by force of habit.

Coincidental research involved polls about what stations respondents were listening to at the time of surveys, while recall measurement ask about listening behavior in the past.

Neely explained that the diary system allowed the collection of records on listening data seven days a week, including listening location—whether at home, in the car, at work or elsewhere.

The findings in the diary system also cover the age, sex, socio-economic groups, and even lifestyles of the users of products and services.

"Respondents are more likely to record even small segments of listening, which enables planners to better determination the reach and frequency of advertising schedule," Neely said.

He said Nielsen research showed that Filipinos—especially Metro Manila residents—age 10 years and older listened to the radio for an average of three hours a day.

A survey of major cities in at least nine countries in the Asia-Pacific showed that radio had the highest penetration rate in Metro Manila at 96.8 percent.

Also, respondents listen to an average of three stations, which means a station does not have the format that could satisfy entirely the listeners' demand.

In Metro Manila, some 95 percent of listeners access the radio at home; 20 percent do so while commuting; about 11 percent listen while at work and 15 percent do so in other ways.

NMR data also showed that top spenders on radio advertising during the first half were Unilab (P1.3 billion); Unilever (P863 million); Fortune Tobacco (P825 million); Procter & Gamble (P402 million); Tanduay (P400 million); Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (P268 million); Nestle (P262 million); San Miguel (P227 million); Colgate (P170 million), and Petron (P163 million).

Jay G. Bautista, NMR executive director, said a major observation made was that advertising spending on "sin products like liquor and cigarettes have significantly shift to radio from television because of laws that limited TV advertising.

"Also, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, airlines and even schools have increased radio ad spending as they targeted lower income consumers," Bautista said.

NMR announced it was launching version 3.0 of its Radio Advisor software by January to offer advertising agencies more accurate audience readings. Officials said "almost all major agencies" were already using the current version of Radio Advisor, but that the new one would allow for easier use and offer enhanced features.

Gov't rejects offers for HGC bonds

From page B2

The auction was held at the Bureau of the Treasury, which invited banks serving as dealers of government securities to participate.

Philippine Commercial Capital Inc., AB Capital and Investment Corp., Multinational Investment Bancorp, RCBC Capital Corp. and SB Capital Investment Corp. served the issue managers and joint lead underwriters for the bond float.

The auction was HGC's first in four years after raising P7 billion in August 2002. *Doris C. Dumlao*

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Sony incurs $175-M operating loss in 2nd quarter

TOKYO—SONY CORP. YESTERDAY said it suffered an operating loss of 20.8 billion yen (175 million dollars) for the three months to September largely due to a mounting defective battery crisis.

The electronics giant, which reported a 74.6 billion yen in operating profit a year earlier, said it booked a 51.2 billion yen provision for the quarter "that relates to charges expected to be incurred as a result of the (battery) recall."

Its net profit for the quarter plunged 94.1 percent to 1.7 billion yen as it incurred a pre-tax loss of 26.1 billion yen, compared with a pre-tax profit of 95.4 billion yen for the same period last year.

Despite the battery woes, sales of its electronics products as well as revenue from its film businesses remained brisk, raising total revenue for the quarter by 8.3 percent to a record 1.85 trillion yen.

Sony left its full year forecast unchanged from its latest projection announced on Thursday last week when it more than halved its operating profit target for the year to March 2007.

The company slashed its target for operating profit to 50 billion yen from 130 billion yen as it cut its net profit target to 80 billion yen from 130 billion, but left its revenue target unchanged at 8.23 trillion yen.

Sony on Tuesday said Welsh-born chief executive Howard Stringer and president Ryoji Chubachi would continue in their jobs to oversee the recall of millions of the group's laptop computer batteries.

Sony officials said last week that as many as 9.6 million of its batteries could now be recalled at a cost of 51 billion yen due to fears they might catch fire.

Sony said it believed microscopic metal particles, produced in the manufacturing processes, may cause short-circuiting and overheating in the affected batteries that were produced between August 2003 and February 2006.

The troubles have hit Sony just as a painful restructuring drive had appeared to be paying off at the iconic company that brought the world the Walkman.

Sony now falls behind rivals like Apple, which manufactures the hit iPod music player.

AFP

BRAVIA
BRAVIA
SONY

SONY Corp.'s Bravia televisions are displayed at an electronics retailer in Tokyo. Sony yesterday said it swung to a quarterly loss after the mounting cost of recalling batteries for notebook computers outweighed the effect of a softer yen and robust sales of flat TVs and digital cameras. REUTERS

Oil prices up in Asian trade

Analysts cited cold weather, Opec production cuts

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES YESTERDAY rose in Asian trade in a strong market boosted by lower US inventories and concerns at a cold snap in the US Northeast, a major consumer of heating oil, dealers said.

At 2:25 p.m. (0625 GMT) New York's main contract, light sweet crude for December delivery, was up 24 cents to 61.64 dollars a barrel from 61.40 dollars in late US trade Wednesday after the contract jumped there by 2.05 dollars.

Brent North Sea crude for December delivery gained 21 cents to 62.26 dollars. The contract rose 2.22 dollars in London.

Steve Rowles, an analyst with CFC Seymour in Hong Kong, said a combination of factors led to the price rebound.

"The cold weather, the US inventory reports and the Opec production cuts which will be coming through in about a week or two," Rowles said.

The US Northeast, the world's biggest consumer of heating fuel, is expected to see temperatures well below the seasonal average until at least the start of November, according to forecasters.

The US Department of Energy (DoE) said in its weekly report Wednesday that crude oil inventories unexpectedly declined 3.3 million barrels to 332.3 million in the week to Oct. 20, compared with market forecasts of an increase by a similar amount.

That was the largest weekly fall since July but the DoE said crude levels "remain well above the upper end of the average range for this time of year."

US crude oil imports averaged 9.5 million barrels per day last week, down a hefty 936,000 from the previous week.

Levels of distillate products, including heating oil and diesel fuel, were down 1.4 million barrels to 144 million over the week. Gasoline or petrol stocks fell 2.8 million barrels to 207.4 million.

"Demand is increasing because of the cold weather," Rowles said. "The colder it is, the higher the demand for heating oil and supply is falling because of the Opec production cuts. The fundamentals of supply and demand are coming back into play."

Phil Flynn, at Alaron Trading, said the steep drop in US imports "may mean that some Opec countries have already started to reduce their production."

The 11-member Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries promised last Friday to cut output by 1.2 million barrels per day from Nov. 1 in an effort to support prices which had been trading about 25 percent below record highs above 78 dollars reached in July.

Saudi Arabia, which is to shoulder nearly a third of the output cuts, has told its Asian customers it will reduce their November deliveries by eight percent but the market continues to watch whether the cartel will fulfill its promise.

Fimat analyst Mike Fitzpatrick said the United Arab Emirates has joined Saudi Arabia in telling customers that export cuts are coming.

"But other members have yet to provide evidence," he said. "With oil prices still relatively high there is still a good bit of skepticism that the cartel can enforce quota discipline."

AFP

Japan said to be most upbeat on hiring in Asia

HONG KONG—JAPAN OFFERS THE BEST employment prospects for executives in key Asian markets this quarter, while a talent shortage is making hiring in China and Hong Kong more difficult, a survey by recruiters Hudson Highland Group shows.

The survey, which covers Japan, China, Hong Kong and Singapore, showed Japan was the only market where hiring expectations in the fourth quarter had improved from the third quarter.

However, hiring across the region remained strong and, while Japan's outperformance reflected stronger-than-expected growth in its economy, it was also due to seasonal factors.

"Companies in markets outside Japan pay a 13th month bonus in January, so they would tend to take stock in the fourth quarter and then ramp up hiring again next year," said Gary Lazzarotto, Asian chief executive officer of Hudson. "In Japan a significant number of companies follow an April-March financial year."

Hudson's quarterly report took in responses from more than 2,300 business executives in the four markets.

The banking sector is a main driver of executive employment growth in Japan as more foreign banks are increasing investment there, the survey showed.

Sixty-three percent of companies surveyed in Japan said they planned to hire in the fourth quarter compared with 56 percent of companies in China, 53 percent in Hong Kong and 52 percent in Singapore.

In Hong Kong and Singapore hiring expectations slipped from the third quarter but were better than a year ago.

In Japan, employment expectations were also higher than a year ago.

Prospects for executives in China fell for a fourth straight quarter, but they have come down from high levels and the job market is still buoyant amid surging foreign investment and a booming economy.

Some 55 percent of employers in China—and 70 percent of companies in Hong Kong—said recruiting had become harder, mainly because of a talent shortage. In China the problem was most acute in health care, media, public relations and advertising and manufacturing.

In Hong Kong, employers are having the most difficulty recruiting staff in the IT&T and media, public relations and advertising sectors as well as in manufacturing where there are severe shortages of managers with experience in production operations.

Reuters

Chinese officials defend soaring trade with Africa

BEIJING—CHINA'S TRADE WITH Africa is set to top $50 billion this year as Beijing gears up to host a China-Africa forum that will deepen much-scrutinized investment ties, officials yesterday said.

China has defended its growing trade ties and its more than $6 billion worth of investments on the continent, whose energy and mineral wealth it covets to fuel its booming economy.

"Chinese investment has promoted economic growth in African countries, increased job opportunities, brought technical applications to African countries and improved living standards for African people," vice commerce minister Wei Jianguo told a news conference.

But resentment has been building, with complaints that the flood of cheap manufactured goods that China exports is damaging local industry and with unrest over labor standards at Chinese-invested companies.

China has been criticized for ignoring human rights and environmental standards and failing to attach demands for transparency and accountability to offers of aid, loans and investment to Africa—particularly to oil producers Sudan and Angola.

World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz was quoted this week as saying China and its banks were ignoring human rights and environmental standards when lending to developing countries in Africa.

Angola overtook Saudi Arabia this year to become China's largest supplier of crude oil, and Chinese energy major Sinopec has offered lavish signature bonuses for oil exploration and production contracts there.

On a seven-nation tour of Africa earlier this year, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao offered Luanda a $2-billion credit line.

China has also come under fire for investing in oil-rich Sudan, whose president, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, was expected to be among the leaders attending the Nov. 3-5 China-Africa ministerial summit in Beijing.

Reuters

China orders 150 A320 aircraft from Airbus

BEIJING—AIRBUS THURSDAY scored a Chinese order of 150 A320 aircraft and finalized an agreement to set up a plant in China as part of a deal bonanza unleashed by French President Jacques Chirac's visit to Beijing.

The Airbus A320 assembly plant, to be located in the north Chinese port city of Tianjin not far from Beijing, will complete its first aircraft in 2009 and will subsequently manufacture four a month, the aircraft maker said.

"It's a means for us to develop a long-term vision with the Chinese," said Louis Gallois, the chief executive of the European aerospace giant. "It's clear that building the planes in China will give the Chinese an incentive to buy more of our aircraft."

The order of 150 A320s, one of 14 deals signed between France and China in Beijing, would likely be a multibillion-dollar deal for the European aerospace giant.

The deal also included an option for China to buy an additional 20 of the European aircraft maker's new wide-body A350 planes.

CHINA SOUTHERN

THIS UNDATED handout photo from Airbus Industries shows an Airbus A320 being used by China Southern Airlines. China has agreed to buy 150 A320 Airbus aircraft, with an option for 20 of its new wide-body A350 planes, said Louis Gallois, head of the European aircraft maker. AFP

No figures were immediately available about the value of the deal.

It follows China's order last year of 150 Airbus planes with a list price of nearly $10 billion, which was signed when Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited France.

Airbus will hold a 51 percent stake in the planned facility in Tianjin, according to sources close to the negotiations between Airbus and China.

In June, China's National Development and Reform Commission, the national planning agency, approved the plans for Tianjin, calling the move an important step for the nation's aviation industry.

China has repeatedly stated its ambition of building large passenger jets by 2020, although it is still struggling to develop a market for domestically built jets of 70 to 90 seats.

The A320, a medium-range, single-aisle twin-engine jet capable of carrying up to about 180 passengers, remains the European company's most popular aircraft after 17 years on the market.

It is in direct competition with Boeing's 737 model.

AFP

STARBUCKS CO

STILL GROWING

A customer leaves a Starbucks store on the 1st floor of the Columbia Center, the tallest building in Seattle, Washington. Starbucks Corp. recently announced a goal of having 40,000 stores worldwide. The company is adding six stores a day on average, the company says. AP

US Fed rates seen to hold steady into '07

WASHINGTON—THE FEDERAL Reserve is set to hold interest rates steady into 2007 as it awaits a clearer outlook for the flagging US economy, according to analysts.

The central bank on Wednesday kept borrowing costs on hold for the third meeting running, arguing that falling energy prices should bring down "elevated" inflation.

After a two-day meeting, the bank's federal open market committee (FOMC) voted 10-1 to keep its main interest rate at 5.25 percent.

In a statement, the FOMC said economic growth had slowed to reflect a cooling housing market, but was "likely to expand at a moderate pace" going forward.

Inflation pressures, while "elevated" now, should "moderate over time" thanks in part to falling oil prices, the panel said in its communique, which contained only marginal changes from last month.

Economists said the FOMC seemed poised to keep US rates on hold for some time to come, after calling off a long-running campaign of hikes in August.

"Anyway, looking ahead, the Fed will need a lot more data before it makes any move," Joel Naroff of Naroff Economic Advisors said. "I would be surprised if there is any change in rates before the spring, unless it is to raise rates. And I still don't expect that to happen."

The FOMC's sole dissenting voice was the hawkish head of the Richmond Fed, Jeffrey Lacker, who again wanted a quarter-point hike in rates.

Merrill Lynch economist David Rosenberg noted that with the Dow Jones share index at all-time highs above 12,000 points, Wall Street certainly believes that corporate profits will perform better than just moderately.

But most pundits still believe the Fed's next move will be to cut interest rates. That would be its first reduction since June 2003, when it lowered the fed funds rate to a historic depth of 1.0 percent.

For the next year, it kept the rate on hold before starting its long run of hikes in June 2004 which continued until the August pause of this year.

Evidence is mounting that the US economy, after growing robustly since 2001, is now hitting the brakes.

US gross domestic product (GDP) slipped to a second-quarter pace of 2.6 percent, compared to a blistering 5.6 percent clip in the year's first three months.

The first GDP estimate for the third quarter, due out Friday, is expected by most economists to show growth slowing further to 2.1 percent.

But in a headache for the Fed, inflation remains stubbornly high at the same time that growth is slowing.

US consumer prices fell 0.5 percent in September. But that was due to tumbling energy costs, and "core" prices excluding food and energy rose 0.2 percent.

Nomura US chief economist David Resler said that in its latest statement, the FOMC had been "a little bit more specific about their outlook, indicating that it seems likely that the economy will expand at a moderate pace."

"The Fed's telling us they're still watching the inflation picture. They're not letting down their guard but there's no reason for action now," Resler said, predicting the next policy shift would be a cut in rates in mid-2007.

AFP

Napocor issue attracts foreign investors

THE STATE-RUN NAtional Power Corp. has issued $500 million in 10-year global funds, attracting more than 210 investors from all over the world.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) said the debt paper, which would mature on Nov. 2, 2016, were fully subscribed within 14 hours, following the announcement of their issuance last Wednesday.

Of the more than 210 investors, 43 percent came from Asia, 26 percent from Europe and 31 percent from the United States, PSALM said.

The Global Funds were guaranteed by the Republic of the Philippines.

This is the only international transaction for Napocor for the year, completing the state firm's offshore funding program for 2006.

The notes were priced at a yield of 6.875 percent.

"The strong investor response to our offering is very encouraging," Napocor president Cyril del Callar said. "With this benchmark deal, we have completed our US dollar funding plans for the year."

For her part, PSALM president Nieves Osorio said the transaction effectively "re-benchmarked the credit of Napocor," better positioning the state firm for future funding exercises.

"The Republic is pleased with the outcome (of the transaction)," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said. "It marks a turnaround in the appetite of international investors for the Napocor credit and manifests their enhanced appreciation of the overall fiscal situation of the Republic."

Proceeds from the transaction are expected to be used to fund Napocor's maturing obligations for the year. *Abigail L. Ho*

BSP expects inflation to further ease in Oct.

Downtrend would likely continue through 2008, officials say

TETANGCO

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas expects the country's inflation rate to further soften in October from a year ago, supported by the peso's appreciation against the US dollar.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said that the inflation rate for October would likely hit anywhere from 5 percent to 5.7 percent—the rate posted in September.

"Deceleration is expected due to the easing of oil and rice prices, alongside a strong peso," Tetangco explained.

The inflation rate measures the increase in basic consumer goods included in the country's consumer price index.

In the quarterly inflation briefing yesterday, BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the inflation downtrend would likely continue through 2008, supported by the decrease in Dubai crude prices, drop in Treasury bill rates, and increase in nominal wages.

But Guinigundo said the BSP would stay alert as upside risks to the inflation outlook remained.

"Oil prices have somewhat improved but ... on liquidity it's difficult to say because you have a continuing surge in capital," Guinigundo said.

"The economic evidence continued to support the case for keeping policy settings unchanged for the near term," he added.

Asked about sterilization, Guinigundo said "sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't."

"If that's the cost of monetary stabilization, by all means we'll do it," he said.

Sterilization is measured as the change in foreign reserves, less the change in base money (as a percentage of gross domestic product).

In the Philippines, the first stage of sterilization is buying excess dollars from the open market, and then mopping up the peso liquidity freed up by the dollar purchases.

Meralco posts turnaround, nets ₱229M in 3rd quarter

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOPEZ-LED MANILA ELECTRIC Co. posted a turnaround in the third quarter, bouncing back from a net loss of P479 million in the third quarter of 2005 to a net income of P229 million in the July-September period this year.

For the first nine months of the year, the company's profit surged 156.1 percent to P596 million from a deficit of P1.06 billion in the same period in 2005.

Meralco said profits would have reached P1.26 billion in the third quarter and P3.6 billion in the January-September period had it not been for the P4.62-billion provision for losses it had booked in the first three quarters.

In the third quarter alone, Meralco provided for losses amounting to P1.59 billion.

These provisions for probable losses stemmed from a rates unbundling case still pending with the Supreme Court.

The high tribunal upheld a Court of Appeals decision nullifying the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of the power distributor's unbundled rates.

This also effectively nullified an ERC-approved rate hike of 17 centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

Meralco had earlier said that every month, until the issuance of the final decision, it would be providing at least P500 million, exclusive of the 32-percent tax shield, for losses that an unfavorable decision could bring.

Meanwhile, revenue in the third quarter increased 1.9 percent to P45.46 billion from P44.62 billion in the same period a year ago.

For the first nine months of the year, Meralco's revenue reached P134.97 billion, 5.7 percent better than last year's performance.

Third-quarter sales declined 0.3 percent to 6,438 gigawatt-hours (GWh) due to shorter billing days, the declaration of Aug. 23 as a holiday, relatively cooler weather and the effects of Typhoon Milenyo.

FONTANA
LEISURE PARKS

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Please be notified that the annual meeting of the stockholders of the Fontana Resort and Country Club, Inc., will be held on November 16, 2006, 10:00 A.M. at the Fontana Convention Center, Clark Special Economic Zone, Pampanga. Following is the Agenda of the meeting:

I. Call to Order
II. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting on December 13, 2005
III. Report on the State of the Club
IV. General Approval of Actions of the Board of Directors
V. Election of the Members of the Board of Directors
VI. Other Matters
VII. Adjournment.

(SGD)
ANGELO PATRICK F. ADVINCULA
Corporate Secretary

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming Bayan

STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(Head Office and Branches)
As of September 29, 2006

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	6,326,925,231
Due from Bangko Sentral		26,499,855,152
Due from Other Banks		909,847,396
Interbank Loans Receivable		14,622,356,291
Trading Account Securities (Net)		2,070,461,017
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		97,744,519,403
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		128,534,253,747
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		-
Equity Investments (Net)		2,832,630,197
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		5,068,286,930
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		12,940,857,928
Others		19,922,283,793
TOTAL ASSETS	P	317,472,077,085
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	89,193,749,568
Savings Deposits		134,717,262,524
Time Deposits		21,861,875,005
Special/Other Deposits		904,125,183
Due to Bangko Sentral		193,599,484
Due to Banks		5,819,631
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		873,144,020
Bills Payable		
BSP-Rediscounting/Special Programs		445,590,986
Interbank Borrowings		-
Deposits Substitutes		237,058,512
Others		26,807,081,122
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		3,250,980,230
Other Liabilities		9,341,431,838
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	287,831,718,103
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	11,971,000,000
Surplus		10,148,404,876
Surplus Reserves		3,059,552,221
Other Capital Accounts		4,461,401,885
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		29,640,358,982
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	317,472,077,085
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	2,542,094,006
Bills for Collection		230,309,997
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		13,379,750,531
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(1,577,598,628)
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		
Invested in:		
- Government Securities		20,952,100,759
- Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stocks		65,169,402
- Loans and Discounts		129,539,184
- Other Assets		12,424,452,552
Accountabilities:		
- Trust and Other Fiduciary		25,797,309,845
Common Trust Funds		647,515,287
- Investment/Fund Management		7,126,436,765
Other Contingent Accounts		344,760,458
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	48,490,578,261

OTHER INFORMATION

1	Deposits of		
	a. Government	P	162,247,485,748
	b. Banks		5,297,610,401
	c. Trust Department		1,165,481,845
2.	Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
	a. Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 6% (Small Enterprises)		22.02%
	b. Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 2% (Medium Enterprises)		4.29%
3.	Amount of Non-Performing Loans		11,529,378,096*
4.	Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio		7.26%
5.	Amount of Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets		33,447,554,136
6.	General Provision for Loan Losses		1,193,692,722
7.	Specific Provision for Loan Losses		14,354,098,583
8.	Return on Equity (ROE)		12.59%
9.	Amount of DOSRI Loans/Advances		26,106,408,168
10.	Ratio of DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		18.45%
11.	Amount of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances		276,403,910
12.	Ratio of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		0.17%

* *Includes Loans Classified as "Loss" which are fully covered by Allowance for Probable Losses amounting to P328,823,316.21*

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and ALFONSO B. CRUZ, JR. of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

Sgd. ANDRES C. SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. ALFONSO B. CRUZ, JR.
OIC/SEVP, Institutional Banking and Subsidiaries Sector

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 23rd day of October 2006 in the City of Manila, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 12306628, issued in Manila on January 6, 2006 and Residence Certificate No. 12325134 issued in Manila on January 9, 2006.

Doc. No. 274
Page No. 56
Book No. VII
Series of 2006

CESAR S. CABANES
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2006
PTR No. 3620247/1-10-05
IBP No. 632075/1-05-05 CAM SUR

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of September 29, 2006

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	6,366,820,924
Due from Bangko Sentral		26,499,855,152
Due from Other Banks		913,535,721
Interbank Loans Receivable		14,622,356,291
Trading Account Securities (Net)		2,070,461,017
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		97,800,741,144
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		128,794,396,097
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		-
Equity Investments (Net)		1,923,498,882
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		5,162,688,191
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		12,956,149,764
Others		20,927,032,888
TOTAL ASSETS	P	318,037,534,071
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	89,171,254,235
Savings Deposits		134,676,359,078
Time Deposits		21,861,875,005
Special/Other Deposits		904,125,183
Due to Bangko Sentral		193,599,484
Due to Banks		5,819,631
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		873,144,020
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounting/Special Programs		445,590,986
Interbank Borrowings		-
Deposits Substitutes		237,058,512
Others		26,807,081,122
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		3,888,853,107
Other Liabilities		9,330,679,709
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	288,395,440,072
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	11,971,000,000
Surplus		10,154,116,342
Surplus Reserves		3,058,916,692
Other Capital Accounts		4,458,060,965
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		29,642,093,999
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	318,037,534,071
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	2,542,094,006
Bills for Collection		230,309,997
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		13,379,750,531
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(1,577,598,628)
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TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	48,490,578,261

OTHER INFORMATION

1	Deposits of		
	a. Government	P	162,247,485,748
	b. Banks		5,297,610,401
	c. Trust Department		1,165,481,845
2	List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries		
	a. LBP Leasing Corporation		
	b. LBP Financial Services, SPA		
	c. LBP Remittance Co., USA		

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and ALFONSO B. CRUZ, JR. of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Consolidated Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

Sgd. ANDRES C. SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. ALFONSO B. CRUZ, JR.
OIC/SEVP, Institutional Banking and Subsidiaries Sector

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 23rd day of October 2006 in the City of Manila, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 12306628, issued in Manila on January 6, 2006 and Residence Certificate No. 12325134 issued in Manila on January 9, 2006.

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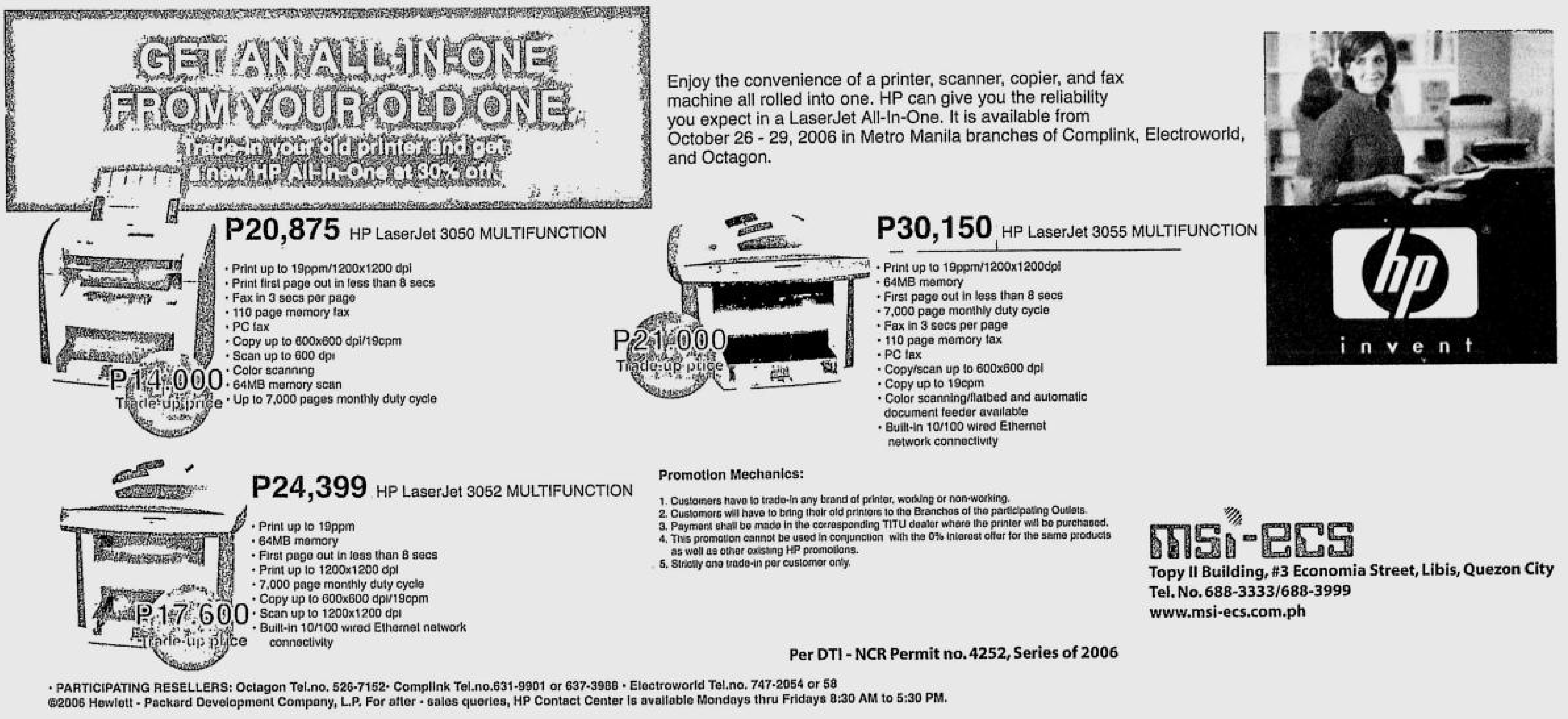
HEAD OFFICE
1598 M. H. del Pilar cor. Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Telephone Numbers: 552-0000; 551-2200; 450-7001
Phone Access Numbers: 405-7000 or 1-800-10-405-7000 (Toll Free)

www.landbank.com

MEMBER : Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (Deposits insured up to P250,000.00)



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P20,875 HP LaserJet 3050 MULTIFUNCTION
- Print up to 19ppm/1200x1200 dpi
- Print first page out in less than 8 secs
- Fax in 3 secs per page
- 110 page memory fax
- PC fax
- Copy up to 600x600 dpi/19cpm
- Scan up to 600 dpi
- Color scanning
- 64MB memory scan
- Up to 7,000 pages monthly duty cycle

P14,000 Trade-up price

P30,150 HP LaserJet 3055 MULTIFUNCTION
- Print up to 19ppm/1200x1200dpi
- 64MB memory
- First page out in less than 8 secs
- 7,000 page monthly duty cycle
- Fax in 3 secs per page
- 110 page memory fax
- PC fax
- Copy/scan up to 600x600 dpi
- Copy up to 19cpm
- Color scanning/flatbed and automatic document feeder available
- Built-in 10/100 wired Ethernet network connectivity

P21,000 Trade-up price

P24,399 HP LaserJet 3052 MULTIFUNCTION
- Print up to 19ppm
- 64MB memory
- First page out in less than 8 secs
- Print up to 1200x1200 dpi
- 7,000 page monthly duty cycle
- Copy up to 600x600 dpi/19cpm
- Scan up to 1200x1200 dpi
- Built-in 10/100 wired Ethernet network connectivity

P17,600 Trade-up price

Promotion Mechanics:
1. Customers have to trade-in any brand of printer, working or non-working.
2. Customers will have to bring their old printers to the Branches of the participating Outlets.
3. Payment shall be made in the corresponding TITU dealer where the printer will be purchased.
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Per DTI - NCR Permit no. 4252, Series of 2006

· PARTICIPATING RESELLERS: Octagon Tel.no. 526-7152· Complink Tel.no.631-9901 or 637-3988 · Electroworld Tel.no. 747-2054 or 58
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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
Securities and Exchange Commission
SEC Bldg., EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

INVITATION TO BID

The Securities and Exchange Commission, through its Bids and Awards Committee for IT Goods and Services (BAC-IT), invites qualified local bidders to bid for the supply, delivery and installation of the following:

Lot	Items	Quantity		Approved Budget For the Contract (ABC)
1	PC Workstations/Servers with UPS	62 units	4,900,000.00	
	Notebook Computer/Laptop	30 units	4,500,000.00	
	Network Printers	10 units	700,000.00	
				10,100,000.00
2	Workgroup Scanners	7 units	770,500.00	770,500.00
3	Multi-Media System/Projector	1 unit	300,000.00	300,000.00
4	Tape Library	1 lot	4,751,400.00	4,751,400.00
5	Additional Capacity for StorEdge 3510	1 lot	3,629,200.00	3,629,200.00
6	Local Area Network (LAN) Cabling	1 lot	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00
				P21,051,100.00

Source of Funds: R.A. 9336

A complete set of bidding documents may be obtained by the bidder starting 27 October to 07 November 2006 from the MIS Division, Basement, SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City upon payment of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) per set of bid document. For further details, you may contact Ms. Lilia O. Pinzon/Ms. Ma. Theresa Samera at Tel. No. 727 6894.

Pre-Bid Conference will be on 07 November 2006, at the ERID Conference Room, 7th Floor, SEC Building. Please refer to the following schedule:

Lot/Item	Schedule
Lot 1–3	9:00 am – 10:30 am
Lot 4–5	10:30 am – 12:00 noon
Lot 6	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Deadline for the submission and opening of bid envelopes will be on 21 November 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the ERID Conference Room, 7th FLoor, SEC Building. Late bid shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the said opening.

Republic Act 9184, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) shall govern all particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation, Post Qualification and Awards of Contracts.

The SEC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s and to waive any required formalities therein and to award the contract to the bidder whose proposal as evaluated is most advantageous to the Commission.

SEC also assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that any award will be made.

For: The Chairman, BAC-IT

(Sgd.) **VIRGILIO V. SALENTES**
Vice-Chairman, BAC-IT

(PDI–Oct. 27 & Nov. 3, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
REGIONAL OFFICE NO. VIII
PAWING, PALO, LEYTE
TEL. NOS. (053-323-3075, 323-3084)
FAX NO 053-323-3061

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR REGISTRATION/ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

PROCUREMENT FOR SECURITY SERVICES CY 2007 FOR NFA REGION VIII

The National Food Authority (NFA) invites all interested Private Security Agencies (PSAs) to register, apply eligibility and bid for the provision of Security Services for Calendar Year 2007 at NFA Regional Office No. VIII. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening. The service contract to be bid shall be divided into lots with one province treated as one (1) Lot, to wit:

LOT	PROVINCE	NO. OF SG	APPROVED ABC	BIDDING FEE
1	NORTHERN LEYTE	24	P 3,731,889.60	P 7,500.00
2	SOUTHERN LEYTE	10	1,554,954.00	3,000.00
3	BILIRAN	4	621,981.60	1,500.00
4	WESTERN SAMAR	9	1,399,458.60	3,000.00
5	NORTHERN SAMAR	19	2,954,412.60	6,000.00
6	EASTERN SAMAR	12	1,865,944.80	4,000.00
	TOTAL	78	P12,128,641.20	

The application forms, eligibility requirements can be secured and submitted at the NFA Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC) Secretariat upon presentation of Letter of Intent and payment of non-refundable application fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00).

Bidding Documents shall be issued to eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable bidding fee per lot as stated above. The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

DATE	ACTIVITY
Oct. 23-Nov. 3, 2006 (8:00 AM-5:00 PM)	Issuance of Registration and Eligibility Requirements (NFA-ROVIII)
Nov. 8, 2006 (5:00 PM)	Deadline for Submission of Required Registration & Eligibility Documents
November 6-13, 2006 (8:00 AM-5:00 PM)	Issuance of Certificate of Registration & Notice of Eligibility/Bid Documents
November 14, 2006 (2:00 PM)	Pre-Bidding Conference (NFA-RO8 Conference Room)
November 27, 2006 (9:30 AM)	Submission and Opening of Bids (NFA-RO8 Conference Room)

All particulars relative to eligibility requirements, bid bond, performance bond, pre-bid conference bid evaluation and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and other applicable rules and regulations.

Special Power of Attorney (SPA) issued by the Prospective Bidder Owner (for sole ownership) and/or resolution from the Board authorizing their representative (for Corporation) to purchase the bid documents, to sign for and behalf of the owner/corporation whatever documents relative to the bidding and to attend pre-bidding conference and during the opening of the bids shall be required.

NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any formality/informality of the bids, received and to accept on such Bids which are advantageous to the National Food Authority.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO J. ADORABLE**
Asst. Regional Manager II/
Chairman, RBAC, NFA-ROVIII

(PDI–Oct. 21 & 27, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
SUTHERLAND GLOBAL SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. 25/F Export Bank Plaza, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Declan Scully	Language Specialist
AMBAK CONSULTANCY & GENERAL SERVICES CORP. Unit 501 Parchateu Condominium, Onyx St., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Miha Park (w/o Mun)	Operation Manager
TOYO CONSTRUCTION CO. LTD. 4/F Princess Building, 104 Esteban St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Hiroki Kohno	Chief Civil Engineer
SUTHERLAND GLOBAL SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. 25/F Export Bank Plaza, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Bradley Kevin Hill	Language Specialist
SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F, Robinsons Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Sangwon Jung	Korean Client Support
SHINE GIRLS HAIR SALON CORP. 504 Guerrero St. cor. Makati Ave., Brgy. Poblacion, Makati City	Sung Nam Kim	Senior Hairstylist
SHINE GIRLS HAIR SALON CORP. 504 Guerrero St. cor. Makati Ave., Brgy. Poblacion, Makati City	Ju Hee Kim	Junior Hairstylist
CHIZZY CORPORATION Pad Unit, CRC Bldg., BF Resort Drive, BF Resort Village, Las Piñas City	Kalechukwu Ajah	Marketing Manager
DELCOL WATER PHIL. INC. Unit 717, Cityland 10 Tower 2, H.V. dela Costa, Makati City	Check Hoon Foo	Chief Operating Officer
GLOBAL STEEL PHILIPPINES (SPV-AMC) INC. Unit 2703, 27/F, 88 Corporate Center, 141 Sedeno cor. Valero Sts. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Rakesh Kumar Chaturvedi	Head - Purchase and Procurement
YOUCHUNG CORP. B13 L20, E. Rodriguez Jr., Ave., Acropolis Green Subd., Bagumbayan, D3, Quezon City	Seung Hee Kim	General Manager
DELL INTERNATIONAL SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. 27/F RCBC Plaza, Tower 2, Makati City	Marshall Heath Johnson	Process Director
MANILA PENINSULA HOTEL INC. (THE PENINSULA MANILA) Ayala cor. Makati Avenue, 1226 Makati City	James John Bevans	Director of Rooms
FIRST CAGAYAN LEISURE AND RESORT CORPORATION 26/F West Tower PSE Center, Exchange Rd. Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Minarti Timur	Technical Assistant to the Office of the Pres. for Sports Development
SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F, Robinsons Summit Bldg., 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Sang Yun Park	Korean Client Support
SOLVIS INTERNATIONAL TRADING INC. Unit 34 Cityland Pioneer Condominium, 128 Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City	Ki Joon Son	Operation Manager
MARUKA ENTERPRISES, INC. G/F Lapanday Center, 2263 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City	Toshimitsu Yokoyama	Service Manager
WEST CONTACT SERVICES, INC. 28/F Export Bank Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., cor. Chino Roces, Makati City	Shaheed Irfaan Hodges	Senior Manager-Partner
COMMONWEALTH ENGINEERS CO., LTD. Unit 4-A, 4/F, Euro Villa II Condo. Bldg., 118 Herrera St., Legazpi Village, Makati City	Yoshimitsu Urabe	General Manager
BIBLE DONG JOO LANGUAGE CORPORATION 2/F LA Consolation Sports Complex, BF Homes International, Las Piñas City	Soon Ae Kang (w/o Kim)	Consultant for Administrative Affairs
RESORT.COM TRAVEL & TOUR INC. Unit 401 A Vareb Mansion, 1679 Mabini St., Brgy. 699, Malate, Manila	Min Kyung Sung	General Manager
INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH FRIENDS CENTER INC. U1101 Pearl Bank Center, 146 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Sungmin Jun	Manager
PHIL 119 TOURS AND TRAVEL AGENCY CORP. U-908 City and Land Mega Plaza Bldg., ADB Ave., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Chun Yeol Yang	Asst. Manager

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI – October 27, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 90, QUEZON CITY

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION
FOR REHABILITATION OF:
SPECIAL PROCEEDING NO. Q-06-159

LEXBER, INC.,
Petitioner.
x- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - x

STAY ORDER

Before this Court is a verified Petition for corporate rehabilitation with prayer for a Stay Order filed by the above-named petitioner.

Briefly, the petitioner alleges that despite the fact that it has total assets of Php 374,109,899.00, it has encountered temporary illiquidity problems which prevents it from paying maturing loans and other obligations. The proposed rehabilitation plan calls *dacion en pago* of certain properties to Land Bank, payment of reduced interest rates ranging from 6% to 8% per annum over ten (10) years, among other things. Consequently, the petitioner prays for the issuance of a Stay Order pending proceedings before this Court.

A careful examination of the petition shows that the same conforms substantially with Section 2, Rule 4 of the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation (see also Supreme Court Resolution *en banc* in A.M. No.00-8-10-SC). This Court therefore finds the Petition to be sufficient in form and substance.

IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, this Court issues a Stay Order, in accordance with Section 6, Rule 4 of the aforecited Interim Rules, as follows:

1.) Appointing Atty. Rafael Chris F. Teston as rehabilitation receiver who shall be considered as an officer of the court and who shall have the powers, duties and functions as provided in Section 14, Rule 4 of the aforecited Interim Rules. The rehabilitation receiver must post a bond of Php 1,000,000.00 before entering upon his powers, duties and functions and must take an oath, as provided under Section 15, Rule 4 of the aforecited Interim Rules. The petitioner is directed to serve immediately a copy of this Stay Order upon the rehabilitation receiver, Atty. Rafael Chris F. Teston who shall manifest his acceptance or non-acceptance of his appointment not later than five (5) days from his receipt hereof.

2.) Staying enforcement of all claims, whether for money or otherwise and whether such enforcement is by court action or otherwise, against the petitioner, and its guarantors and sureties not solidarily liable with the petitioner including the staying of proceedings of collection cases filed against the petitioner, and the staying of the enforcement/implementation of application/s for extra-judicial foreclosure sale/s and actual foreclosure sale/s, if any, against the real and personal properties of the petitioner;

3.) Prohibiting the petitioner from selling, encumbering, transferring, or disposing in any manner any of its properties except in the ordinary course of business.

4.) Prohibiting the petitioner from making any payment of its liabilities outstanding as at the date of filing of the petition on October 9, 2006.

5.) Prohibiting the suppliers of the petitioner from withholding supply of goods or services in the ordinary course of business for as long as the petitioner makes payments for the services and goods supplied after the issuance of this Stay Order.

6.) Directing the petitioner to pay in full all administrative expenses incurred after the issuance of this Stay Order.

The initial hearing on the petition is set on November 21, 2006 (Tuesday) at 2:00 P.M. at the session room of Branch 90 of this Court located at the Ground Floor of the Hall of Justice Building, Quezon City Hall complex, Quezon City. In the event the initial hearing does not push through for any reason like there is no work on said date, the hearing shall be reset to December 4, 2006 (Monday) at 2:00 P.M. All creditors and all interested parties including the Securities and Exchange Commission are directed to file with this Court and serve upon the petitioner a verified comment on or opposition to the Petition, with supporting affidavits and documents, not later than ten (10) days before the date of the initial hearing as set forth above, and they are put on notice that their failure to do so will bar them from participating in the proceedings before this Court. All creditors and all interested parties are further directed to secure from this Court copies of the Petition and its annexes within such time as to enable them to file their verified comment on or opposition thereto and to prepare them for the initial hearing and to attain this purpose, the petitioner is ordered to file with this Court initially ten (10) additional copies of the Petition and its annexes within ten (10) days from receipt hereof.

The petitioner is furthermore directed by this Court to have a copy of this Order published in the business section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Star and one other newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines chosen by raffle if it is a newspaper other than the herein-named newspapers, considering the probable presence of creditors and interested parties in other parts of Luzon, once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks, with the last publication effected at least three (3) weeks prior to the date of initial hearing as set forth above, at the expense of the petitioner.

Atty. Mercedita C. Cariño, Branch Clerk of Court, is ordered to see to it that the Process Server shall serve immediately copies of this Stay Order upon: 1) Mr. Alejandro G. Cruz-Herrera (the president of the petitioner), Lexber, Inc., 63 Panay Avenue, Quezon City, 2) Atty. Patricia M. Osoteo (counsel for the petitioner), 2203-A West Tower, Philippine Stock Exchange Centre, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City; 3) Atty. Rafael Chris F. Teston, 10 Amber St., Phase I, Pilar Village, Las Piñas City; and 4) the Honorable Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission, EDSA (Epifanio De Los Santos Avenue), Mandaluyong City.

SO ORDERED.

Quezon City, October 16, 2006

(Sgd.) REYNALDO B. DAWAY, C.P.A.
Presiding Judge

(PDI – Oct. 27 & 31, 2006)

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afp retirement and separation benefits system

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR SECURITY SERVICES

1. The **AFP RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION BENEFITS SYSTEM (AFP-RSBS)** now invites Bids from Eligible Bidders for the Procurement of Security Services for the following AFP-RSBS properties as stated below:

PROJECT	LOCATION	NO. OF GUARDS	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)	COST OF ELIGIBILITY AND BID DOCUMENTS (non-refundable)
Security Services for Calamba/Tanuan, Batangas Property	Calamba, Laguna/Tanauan, Batangas	23	P3,588,000.00	P5,500.00
Security Services for General Santos Property	General Santos City	7	P960,000.00	P1,500.00

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
3. Interested parties shall submit proposal/s on any or all of the aforementioned projects. One project is equivalent to a single award or contract, separate and distinct from each other.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the **AFP-RSBS** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 am to 5:00 pm*.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents will be available for issuance to interested applicants from 6 **November 2006** and may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount as above-stated. The method of payment will be *cash*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The *AFP-RSBS* will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **November 20, 2006, 2:00 pm at AFP-RSBS Board Room, AFPRSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City**.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or **before 9:00 am of 4 December 2006**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of *cash, check or bank guarantee* and in the amount specified in the Bid Data Sheet or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. **Bid opening** shall be on **December 4, 2006, 9:05 am** at the **AFP-RSBS Board Room, AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City**. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the following address:

Bids and Awards Committee
AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Tel Nos. 9114071 local 204/289/281

10. The *AFP-RSBS reserves* the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **BGEN. FRANKLIN C. ACOSTA (Ret)**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Oct. 20 & 27, 2006)

BAYWATCH TOWER
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(at the back of Chinese Embassy, Roxas Boulevard, Manila)

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that **South China Resources, Inc.** (formerly South China Petroleum & Exploration, Inc.) has moved to a new address:

3/F Low Rise Pacific Star Bldg.,
Sen Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave.,
Makati City

We can be reached thru the following numbers:

Tel. No.: (632) 892-2049
Telefax No.: (632) 812-2383

(PDI - Oct. 23 to 27, Oct. 30 to 31, & Nov. 1 to 3, 2006)

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Tel# 889-7956

Drag2raise: The 'raising' event of the year

MORNING STAR PRODUCTIONS, KNOWN for its TV Production and Drag Racing events, is coming up with another hot-steaming drag racing event due to racers requests on Oct. 27 and 28, dubbed as Drag2Raise in cooperation with the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation and The Rotary Club of Makati Cristo Rey District 3830. It will be held at the Batangas Racing Circuit, Rosario, Batangas.

Morning Star Productions will be giving P400, 000 in prizes and giveaways up for grabs at the racing event of the year where north meets south.

There will also be a one hour TV Special regarding Drag2Raise event to be telecast in November, 11 p.m. to 12 m.n. at RPN Channel 9.

POEA 24-HR HOTLINES 722-1144 • 722-1155

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS
NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
BIR Road, East Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR GOODS AND CONSULTING SERVICES

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites systems integrators (SI) to apply for eligibility and short listing and if found eligible and short listed, to bid for the hereunder Project.

Name of Project : eNTC Phase 2 - NTC automated Spectrum Management System (ASMS) Project, Database Development, Hardware/equipment (Database Server Spectrum Management., System Server, Database Storage with Controller UPS for servers), Software (Database Management System)

Brief Description : Spectrum Management is a core function of the NTC performed collaboratively by its various organizational units and consists of integrated processes and databases. ASMS is intended to be a web-based information system that will allow the submission of various applications including supporting documents for frequency assignments, station licenses, equipment certification/type approval, radio equipment and Customer Premises Equipment, dealers and suppliers, payment of fees, application status monitoring and other related services to be done through the NTC Web portal with backend systems fully computer-aided. Specifically, the Project shall consist of the following:

Scope of Work :

1. **Provision of ASMS Software Package**
   a. This presupposes that the Information and Communication Technology Integrator offer a software package with seamlessly integrating functionalities such as: (1) Radio Frequency Planning and Allocations; (2) Radio Frequency Assignment; (3) Engineering/ Technical Analysis Tools (4) Radio Station Licensing; (5) Equipment Type Approval; (6) Radio Equipment Dealer/CPE Suppliers Licensing; (6) Radio Frequency Coordination and Notification; (8) Radio Enforcement (Inspection and Spectrum Surveillance; (9) Geographic Information System; (11) Revenue (license, Radio Spectrum fees and others) Management and Tracking; and (12) General Administration.
   b. Software Package should be inclusive of the necessary/appropriate training package.

   [1]The Software Package must have at least two (2) reference sites in the ASEAN or Asia Pacific Region.
2. **Customization and Systems Design and Development**
   This requires that the ASMS software package can be customized or modified and the additional modules can be designed and developed as necessary, by the ICT Integrator in order to meet the complete NTC functional requirements and system capabilities and/or features.
3. **Database Conversion and Build-up**
   This requires that the existing NTC electronic and manual files currently used in its spectrum management be converted and migrated into the ASMS database.
4. **Provision of Hardware/Software and Services**
   This requires that the basis hardware and software requirements to be used in the customization, development, testing and implementation of the ASMS will be identified, delivered and installed and operationalized by the ICT integrators

   [2] Inclusive of user technical training.

Contract Budget P32,000,000.00

Funding Unprogrammed Fund, FY 2005, General Appropriations Act, RA 9336.

Bid Processes and Schedules

	Bid Activities	*Date/Period*
1	Submission of LOI and Application for Eligibility	Oct. 20-Nov.3, 2006
2.	Issuance of Eligibility Forms	October 20, 2006
3	Submission of Eligibility Requirements	November 3, 2006
4	Eligibility Requirements Evaluation Period	Nov. 6 – 9, 2006
5	Posting of Short List	November 9, 2006
6	Issuance of Bid Documents	November 10, 2006
7	Pre Bid Conference	November 15, 2006
8	BAC Open for Clarification Requests	Nov. 15-16, 2006
9.	Issuance of Bid Bulletin	November 17, 2006
10.	Submission of Bids	December 4, 2006
11	Opening of Bids	December 4, 2006

Evaluation Method : Quality Based method

Subscription to Eligibility Forms : The eligibility screening form will be available and may be secured from the BAC Secretariat, upon submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI)

Subscription to Bid Documents : Bid Documents will be available only to short listed bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Twenty Five Thousand pesos (P25,000.00) to the National Telecommunications Commission, Cashier.

Contact Information : Sophia Lynn B. Lumantod BAC Secretariat, NTC Building, BIR Road, East Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City.

Waiver : The National Telecommunications Commission assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Posting Schedules : October 20, 2006 and October 27, 2006

(Sgd.) JAIME M. FORTES, JR.
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Oct. 20 & 27, 2006)

More Classifieds

National Food Authority	Page A10
Pag-ASA	Page A10

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis Street, Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines
Telephones (632) 5513438 • 5513454 • Facsimile (632) 5513436
E-mail: info@peza.gov.ph • Website: www.peza.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY (PEZA), through its Corporate Budget for CY 2006 intends to apply the sum of PhP 7,304,718.13 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Operation & Maintenance of Pump Stations, Water Distribution System, STP, & Transmission Lines at the Cavite Economic Zone.** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The PEZA now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the operation and maintenance of CEZ's pump stations and sewerage treatment plants, its electro-mechanical components, equipment, safety devices, and control panel system twenty-four (24) hours daily. This includes the repair and maintenance of water and sewerage distribution/transmission lines, including installation/disconnection of water meters twenty-six (26) days each month for a period of one (1) year. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a single similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the ABC and at least five (5) years experience in the operation and maintenance industry. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the PEZA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from 27 October to 03 November 2006, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mondays to Fridays from the address below upon submission of a certified copy of their Phil-GEPS Certificate of Registration and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos Only (PhP 5,000 00). The method of payment will be on a cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The PEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on 16 November 2006, 2:00 p.m at the 6th Floor, Social Hall, PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:00 a.m. of 28 November 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of GSIS Surety Bond in the amount of not less than 2.5% of the ABC or in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit in the amount of not less than *1% of the ABC.* Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on 28 November 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the 6th Floor Social Hall, PEZA Bldg. III Roxas Blvd. corner San Luis St., Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
9. In case any of the above dates is declared a special non-working holiday, it will automatically be reset on the next working day.
10. The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat
3/F PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City
Tel. No.891-6444 / Telefax No. 551-9587
e-mail: peza_bac_secretariat@yahoo.com
website: www.peza.gov.ph

THE CHAIRMAN
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Oct 27 & Nov. 3, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Central Luzon Regional Office
Cabanatuan City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority Central Luzon Regional Office, Cabanatuan City (CLRO) invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the repair of GID Warehouse NFA Baler Aurora Branch Office.

NAME OF PROJECT	APPROVED BUDGET
Repair of GID Warehouse	Php 2,259,404.30

SCHEDULE OF PRE-QUALIFICATION, PRE-BIDDING AND BIDDING

Issuance of Contractor's Eligibility Forms and Deadline for Submission of Accomplished Contractor's Eligibility Forms and Requirements	November 6-10, 2006
Issuance of Bid Documents	November 13-22, 2006
Pre-bidding conference	November 23, 2006; 2:00 PM
Bidding proper	December 5, 2006; 2:00 PM

All interested parties shall submit their eligibility statements and bid proposal in the prescribed forms to the Chairman of the bid and award committee (BAC), National Food Authority, Maharlika Highway, Cabanatuan City.

Eligibility forms may be secured at the NFA-BAC Secretariat upon presentation of letter of intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (Php 500.00).

Bidding documents and plans shall be issued only to eligible bidders upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 2,000.00.

All particulars relative to eligibility, bid bond, performance bond, pre-bid conference, bid evaluation and award of contract shall be governed by the provision of RA-9184 and other applicable rules and regulations.

Venue for the pre-bidding conference, submission and opening of bids shall be at the NFA Regional Office, Conference Room.

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Thereof, to waive any formalities or defects found, or to accept such bids or to award to any contractor whose bids is considered most advantageous to the NFA or to the Government.

The NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN J. RESIDE**
Assistant Regional Director
RBAC Chairman

(PDI - Oct. 27 & Nov. 3, 2006)

City Government of Zamboanga
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBOANGA** invites PhilGEPS suppliers to apply for the following items.

Name of Projects	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/ Opening of Bids	
1. Drugs and Medicines	P 5,961,142.10	October 27, 2006 10:00 A.M	November 08, 2006 10:00 A.M.	P 1,600.00
2 Office Supplies	P 2,056,848.60	October 27, 2006 10 00 A.M.	November 08, 2006 10.00 A.M.	P 900.00
3. Job-Order: Labor and Materials: Thermoplastic Markings	P 2,999,988.00	October 27, 2006 10.00 A.M.	November 08, 2006 10:00 A.M.	P 1,000.00

The Bid documents shall be available at the City Mayor's Office, Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Division, City Hall, Zamboanga City starting **October 20 to November 08, 2006** upon payment of non-refundable fee indicate above.

The Pre-Bid conference shall be held at **City Engineer's Office, Conference Hall, City Hall, Zamboanga City.**

The Bidder shall drop and enclose the original of the Technical Proposal in one sealed envelope; whereas, the original of the Financial Proposal shall be enclosed in another sealed envelope. Both envelopes shall then be placed in another single envelope. In the bid box located at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Division at telephone no. (062) 992-7763.

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBOANGA** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) DR. MARIO D. ARRIOLA
BAC Chairman

(PDI – October 20 & 29, 2006)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/ contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project as stated below:

Item / Description	Approved Budget	Date/Time		Non-Refundable Fee
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/ Opening of Bids	
300 Units SMS Power Resetting Device	P11,550,000.00	November 9, 2006 2:00 PM	November 22, 2006 1:00 PM	P 5,800 00

The Bid Documents shall be available at the General Services Department starting October 20, 2006 upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at GSD Conference Room, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M. H. del Pilar cor. Dr. J. Quintos Sts., Malate, Manila.

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes placed in single outer envelope and sealed accordingly in the bid box located at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the LBP-Requisitions Management Division at telephone nos. 551-2200 locals 2452, 2453, 7233 & 7234.

LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

(PDI - Oct. 20 & 27, 2006)

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Elianto offers free Accent Nail Art

BOLD HUES, VIBRANT SHADES, chic designs Elianto, Malaysia's number one and fastest growing skin care and cosmetic brand, brings you a world of color as it offers Accent Nail Art for free!

For a minimum single purchase of P200 Nail Care products in Elianto at the SM Mall of Asia (Oct. 28 and 29) and SM North Edsa (Nov. 11 and 12), shoppers may avail themselves of a design of their choice, which will be applied by Elianto's guest nail artist Tricia Chua.

Having one of the widest arrays of nail polish at 60 brilliant shades, Elianto lets you pick from the conservative palest of pinks to the most frivolous bright blues and greens. Each of Elianto's long-lasting nail polish is ideal for Nail Art with its quick drying and chip-resistant formulation. At only P99 per shade, it's so affordably easy to come up with endless color combinations!

Unlike basic nail polish application, Nail Art is decorative nail painting with a variety of patterns and effects incorporating many color combinations. With Elianto's rich selection, you can flash designs that express your most festive mood, beginning from the basic two-tone look to elaborate occasion-themed motifs.

Aside from its extensive Nail Care line, Elianto has the widest assortment of naturally inspired body and skin care products, as well as the renowned tropical cosmetics that are specially made for countries experiencing hot and humid weather.

Visit Elianto outlets in SM Mall of Asia, 2nd floor Entertainment Building or SM North Edsa-The Block 3rd floor for your free Accent Nail Art. Elianto is also available in SM City Fairview, ground floor Annex and SM City Clark, ground floor and soon to open in SM City Manila.

OBITUARIES

EDWIN PATRICK MCMAHON CHEBAT

Peacefully joined our Creator on October 25, 2006 at the age of 75.

His remains shall be at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

He is survived by his family: **Mary (Maraya), Mely, Jingy & Paul, Frankie & Mely, Gay & Marc, Judith & Dwaky, Michael & Rissa. Ragi, Lara** and **Yanna,** his grandchildren, brothers, sister and relatives request your Prayers for the eternal repose of **Edwin's** soul are much appreciated by his Family, relatives and friends.

Interment will be on Saturday, October 28, 2006 after the 9 a.m. Mass.

FEDERICO J. ONG

Who passed away on October 22, 2006 at the age of 69.

May he rest in Peace!

His loving wife **Teresita**; children **Vicky** and **Bobbit, Mary Ann** and **Mark**; grandchildren **Ria, Leandro, Budoy, JC, TJ, Mac-Mac, Lee-Lee** and **Jari** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington East, The Garden Chapels, 1354 C. Raymundo Avenue cor. Mercedes Avenue, San Miguel, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Saturday, October 28, 2006 at Tugatog Cemetery, Malabon, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass which will be held at the Chapel.

Former Consul General

ATTY. LEOVIGILDO A. ANOLIN

of Umingan, Pangasinan

February 9, 1921 – October 24, 2006

His loving wife **Patria**; children and children-in-law **Myrna, Eva, Lena** and **Arturo, Edgardo** and **Natee, Leah** and **Bob, Nora** and **Bill, Daisy** and **Sonny, Sam** and **Maricel**; surviving brother **Ernesto;** grandchildren and great grandchildren request the faithful reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence in Umingan, Pangasinan. Interment will be at 9:30 a.m. after the second regular Mass on Sunday, October 29, 2006 in Umingan.

> *"Only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life;*
> *I will dwell in the house of the Lord for Years to come.."*
>
> Psalm 23:6

Jaime Lim Pang, M.D.

of Jones, Isabela
UST Medicine & Surgery Batch 1968
Born Dec. 14, 1943 Died Oct. 19, 2006

His mother, **Anastacia**; wife **Victoria**; children **Marijo & Biboy, James & Cef, Azon & Jay, Jacky & Mart, Jessica & Ceo, John** and **Jean**; grandchildren **Tricia, Ryan, Lance, Kitten, Alexis, Erin & Adrian,** relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapel, G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Oct. 28, 2006 7:00 AM at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

**I am
the way,
the truth
and the
life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.**

John 14:6

Who is the Real No. 1 Domestic Airline?

Scheduled Domestic Passenger Traffic
July 2005 to August 2006*

Airline	Pax Carried	Seats	Share (%)
PAL	4,380,903	5,877,350	48.8%
Airline No. 2	2,762,885	3,984,683	30.8%
Airline No. 3	1,041,459	1,549,049	11.6%
Airline No. 4	512,922	1,049,513	5.7%
Airline No. 5	277,346	398,257	3.1%
TOTAL	8,975,515	12,858,852	100%

* Latest certified figures by the Civil Aeronautics Board, Department of Transportation and Communications

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'Rational choice' goes for share of heart

Phone brand shedding off high-end image with new brand personality

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

AFTER TURNING five years old, mobile phone maker Sony Ericsson, is dressing itself up in a new "brand personality" that hopes to tap into a wider market.

While its officials contend that its line of phones had always served a wide range of consumers, they also admit that the brand is associated more with its high-end range.

This tag was earned largely because of its first winners—the T68i, the first colored screen phone; and the P800, the world's first PDA (personal digital assistant) phone.

When the P800 was launched in Manila, every techie and career person deemed it a must to have it. And local dealers ran out of units.

In the Philippines, the brand is more associated with "careerists" as Sony Ericsson marketing head Patrick Larraga calls the young working people at the forefront of new technology use.

But without stating it, the firm acknowledges the upper market is but a small niche. The bigger volumes come from the less affluent and less techie individuals.

"We now want stronger growth. We want to go beyond our core markets," Larraga states in an interview with the INQUIRER.

My Music
Online Store
Now Playing
Artists
Albums
Tracks
Playlists
Open
More

THIS MODEL is popular among the young.

The brand hopes to achieve this with a new look in its ads and a new line of phones that carry more affordable price tags than its more known units.

The new colors for one will now have variety from the black, white and green colors it used in the past.

"The ads will have different personality, different colors. There will not be blues, reds and whites. It will appeal to a wider base. We want to create a warmer brand," Larraga explains.

The ultimate goal would be to be as ubiquitous and serving a wider audience as Nokia, currently the number one phone brand in the world.

In the Philippines, everyone acknowledges that Nokia is number one. But no one can tell for sure who's number two. Brands like Samsung and Sony Ericsson lay claim to this position.

For Sony Ericsson to reach a bigger market, its communication will now tap into the other segments with phone models selling at P13,000—a far cry from the P25,000 tag of its Cyber-shot and the P35,000 tag of its P990i.

"People buy phones for features," Larraga notes.

To get to know its consumers more, Sony Ericsson conducted a worldwide research. The result was a grouping of eight consumer profiles. Larraga says they used to classify their users into only four groups but further study showed a bigger segmentation.

Larraga is mum about these groups but says the groupings are "really more psychographics than demographics."

Sony Ericsson's major division of its phones are imaging, led by its Cyber-shot; its enterprise phones led by its PDA phone P990i; and its music phones led by the Walkman phones.

The phone company is a joint venture between Sony Corp. of Japan and Ericsson of Europe.

Larraga says this partnership has been advantageous in the crafting of new designs and innovations. The Walkman was of course created by Sony, along with the Cyber-shot digital cameras.

"Part of Sony Ericsson's strengths is what the sister companies bring to the equation, expressive design. People buy for beauty," Larraga says.

Ultimately, Larraga says, "we are the rational choice, now we want a share of the heart. We want to appeal to the heart and the mind."

Banking on a 'chocolate' to expand market share

By Riza T. Olchondra

LG MOBILE, A unit of South Korea-based LG Electronics, has beefed up its business in the Philippines in the hopes that a good performance in "one of the world's most sophisticated phone markets" will secure LG's number 4 position in the global GSM market.

Data from Strategy Analytics Inc. puts LG Mobile at number four for GSM devices worldwide, number one for the CDMA handset. The data research company also named LG as the fastest growing mobile phone brand in North America, Europe, Australia, and the Middle East, as well as various CDMA and GSM markets in Asia.

To further expand its market share, LG is focused on creating next generation devices that offer consumers stylish units with multimedia messaging and high-speed connectivity, LG Mobile head manager Ben Valencia says in an interview.

LG has pinned its hopes on the LG Chocolate Phone, a sleek and stylish black slider that has received rave reviews for style and functionality in the United States and Europe, among other markets.

The LG Chocolate Phone (KG800) is the banner phone of LG Mobile Philippines and is currently driving unprecedented growth for LG Mobile since its global launch that started last May 2006 in the United Kingdom, its first launch after South Korea.

Also in the Philippine market is the KG920, the world's slimmest GSM 5 megapixel handset available at just 18mm wide. It is equipped with a digital camera that rotates 180 degrees.

SLEEK AND STYLISH, this one has received rave reviews.

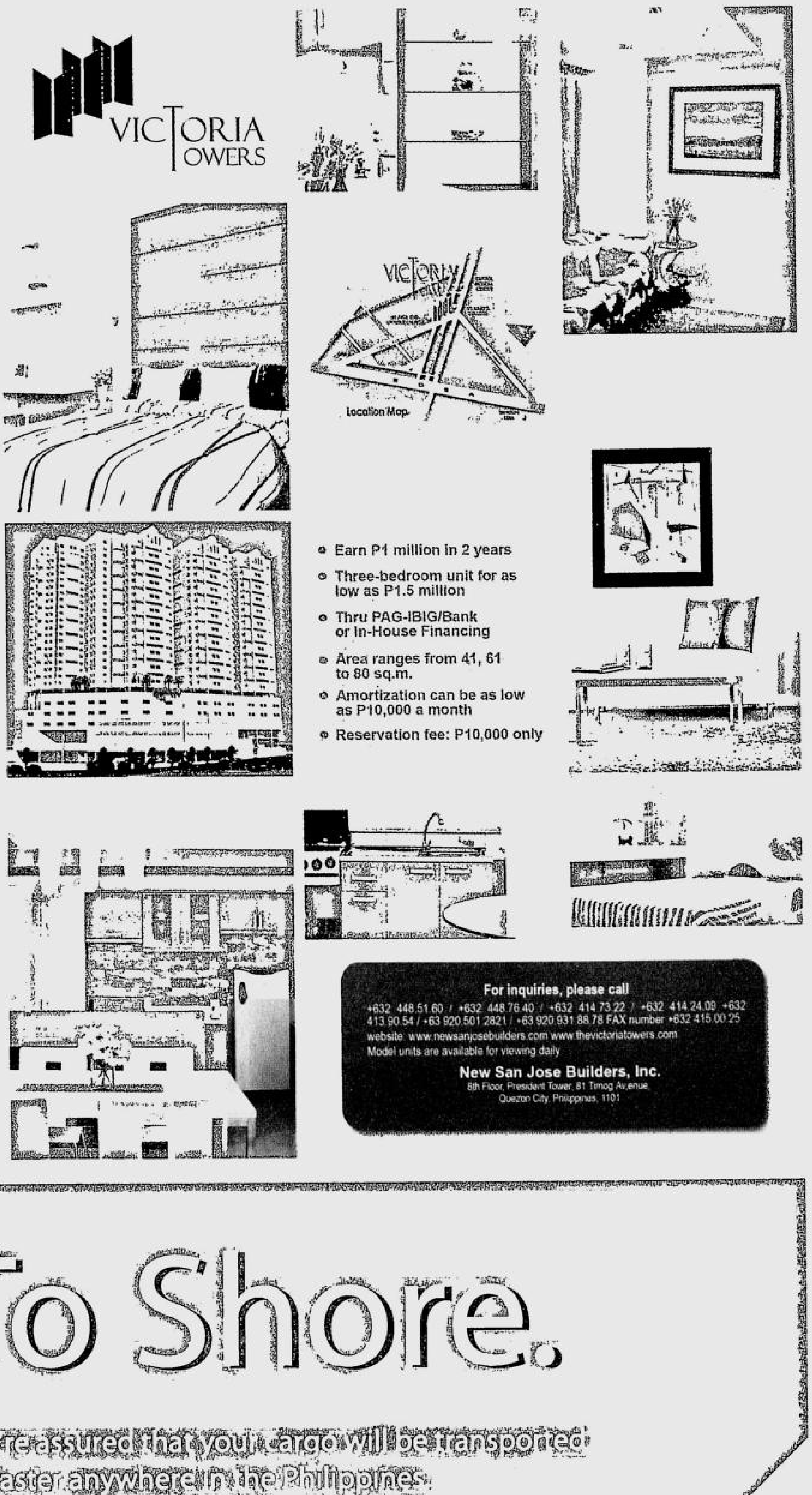
Another phone in the lineup is the LG KG320. The candy bar phone has a 1,000-entry phonebook and a 1.77-inch display.

The KG220 handsets, called "The Butterfly" for its sleek clamshell exterior, offers camera and video capabilities for close-up and landscape shots are no longer confined to professional photographers alone, but are now available to all style savvy individuals at the touch of a button.

The new roster of LG mobile phones is available in all E-Phone retail outlets and other accredited TCI (Telecom Concepts Inc.) nationwide.

"The lineup we are presenting and (those) already in the pipeline for launching in the next few months represent hubs of communication, entertainment and style," Valencia said. "While direct communication will continue to be the primary role of a mobile device, LG believes that worldwide consumers are ready to make their mobile phones their all-in-one entertainment device."

"LG combines dynamic design and user-friendly advanced mobile communication technology and we are putting into place an innovative marketing that aims to propel a significant mobile phone presence," said LG Electronics Philippines Inc. president and CEO Jeff Hong in a statement.



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BICOL CRAFT MAKERS BIND

No materials, no access to designers

LESS than one percent of Bicol's abaca produce go to the fibercraft sector. JOHNNY VILLENA

By Delma L. Peyra
Inquirer Southern Luzon

DARAGA, ALBAY—ONE OF Bicol's main strengths as home to handicraft industries, is its wide availability of raw materials—abaca, cocofiber, coco shell, bamboo, piña, seagrass, buri and jute.

Yet in terms of the exact kind or quality of materials actually needed, some manufacturers here have to source from other regions or provinces.

At the same time, they have to contend with overseas competitors who import raw materials from the Philippines.

Take for example the ubiquitous abaca fiber in the region.

"For the kind of abaca that we need—the high-grade ones we need for our bags—we have to source it from Davao," relates Nelda Nacion, founder-owner of Prime Legacy, maker of high-end and intricately crafted bags.

"There was a time when export of abaca fiber was restricted so that local users like us could have ready and inexpensive access to them. But now most of them are exported," she continues.

A quick look at the abaca industry here will reveal that less than one percent of Bicol's abaca produce go to the fibercraft sector. Most go to pulp production (94 percent) and cordage (5.3 percent). Most of the raw fibers are exported.

Meanwhile, cottage industries here find themselves empty-handed with a material that is indigenous to the region.

This is happening to a sector that has the biggest potential to employ thousands of people (direct and indirect workers).

The fibercraft sector's demand of abaca is growing.

Mary Ann Molina of the Fiber Development Authority (Fida Region 5) says Bicol's consumption of raw abaca fiber grew at an average of 93 percent from 1996 to 2005 or some 1,196 metric tons annually.

Natural material and design-based home furnishings, wearables and gifts and holiday décors account for more than 90 percent of Bicol's total exports (first semester of 2006)—showing the product thrust of manufacturers here. Almost all use native materials.

Albay alone, according to records furnished by the Department of Trade of Industry-Region 5, accounted for 85 percent of the region's exports in 2005.

Sold were wall decors, bags, fashion accessories, paper products, gifts and holiday décors worth some $45 million or P2.2 billion.

Piracy

Nacion further relates that China, which imports abaca from the Philippines, is giving Filipino manufacturers here a run for their money. To up the competition further, some Chinese firms, she says, have even resorted to pirating skilled craft makers from Bicol and bringing them overseas to train Chinese workers.

The same is also happening with Filipino designers. According to Wellington Flores, Fida marketing specialist, poaching of Filipino designers to serve other firms abroad is very rampant these days.

Gloria Baldo, owner of Wyn's Exports which exports 90 percent of its housewares and bags, cites the need for access to designers in their business.

"Common now is a buyer who will just post a design of say, a bag, in the Internet—and allow suppliers or manufacturers from anywhere in the world to bid for costs and materials."

"Each product," she says, "requires different materials. Maybe we have a lot of designers, but we don't get to have an access to most of them."

Yet, one of the competitive advantages of the Philippines is its design.

This was highlighted by a petition by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) to include design products in the areas accorded special attention by a Malacañang task force, set up in 2004, to "create and promote globally competitive service sectors."

The three areas identified were IT and IT-enabled services, the wellness/healthcare services and global logistics.

The ECCP appeal says, "Philippine designers target the sophisticated consumer. They can't compete with the likes in China on price but they can capitalize on coveted strengths in workmanship and materials."

In fact, the DTI has been saying that there are a lot of opportunities in the high-end market, such as what Prime Legacy of Nacion is doing.

The ECCP further says many are of the opinion that the country is the "Milan of Asia" because of its "reputation as design-oriented producer of gifts, accessories, furnishings and furniture. But then, sad to say, the 'Milan of Asia' does too little for its designers."

One of ECCP's suggestions is for the country to have a "School of Art and Design."

Another is that research and development be added to designing of products to make them more competitive.

Luckily, according to Nacion, the Department of Science and Technology has been helpful in this regard.

The DOST has helped them for example in the dyeing of their bags. Thus, for a particular. design, the colors would come out exactly what they want them to be, and have more color-consistency in all the ordered pieces of a particular design.

Ready source

Flores says the places to go to for high-grade abaca fiber are Camarines Sur and Manito in Albay.

For semi-finished abaca products such as braids and twines, Malilipot and Malinao, also in Albay, have these.

There are many producers of abaca weaves such as "sinamay" or "hinabol" in Daraga and Camalig towns and Tabaco City.

For the sophisticated abaca silk or "pinukpok" used by designers like Patis Tesoro, Legazpi City's Banquerohan's Weavers Association can bring in supply.

There are also makers of pinukpok in the province of Catanduanes. One is the Apanti Corp. which counts designer Ditas Sandico-Ong as client.

Fida also sees much potential in the coco coir or coconut fiber, which, aside from its industrial use, is now also used to make doormats, carpets, bags and other decorative houseware items.

Piña fiber is also now available in Camarines Norte, a province now into mass growing of pineapples.

Food makers tap into Japan's 'shoku iku'

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE JAPANESE word "shoku" means food and diet while "iku" means education.

"Shoku Iku is a concept that reflects the Japanese government's drive to promote healthy living," says Trade Assistant Secretary Fe Agoncillo-Reyes.

Three Filipino food firms recently participated in the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Food and Beverage Exhibition held in Tokyo which carried the theme "Flavors of Asean, the Choice of Shoku Iku of Japan."

The companies' tack was to expose Japanese consumers to Filipino delicacies most of them have not heard of and hopefully get hooked on their offerings.

If one of your favorite chocolate products are those from Japan with macadamia nuts, it is no longer far-fetched to expect new goodies to come with our very own pili nut.

This is what local food exporters are hoping for as they carry on a relentless campaign to promote distinctly Filipino products in various international trade expositions and exhibits.

Reyes also heads the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions, which helped the three enterprises take part in the Asean Japan Center's yearly trade fair.

"This year's Philippine participation in the AFB exhibition is aimed at helping SMEs address the strict global safety standards of Japan and help them find a new niche for their delicacies," Reyes adds.

She says the pili nut was the latest addition in the line of products being export to Japan, which include nata de coco and various seafood products.

"Promoting the pili nut in Japan would not only tap the huge potential of this product to raise our export revenues but also help allied industries in the Bicol region," says Reyes.

Consisting six provinces, the Bicol region is the current center of the pili nut industry in the country.

Reyes cites a study made at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, home to macadamia breeders, which found that the Philippine pili nut is equivalent to macadamia.

"It is not only an extraordinary nut but also rich in nutritional value, which makes it a potential export in the health-conscious Japanese market," she says.

There is much to be leveraged with the ever-growing Filipino communities scattered worldwide aside from the influence of migrant populations in general. There are vast markets of people missing home and their native foods, and people living multicultural lifestyles willing to try out foreign tastes.

Health issues remain a priority as more and more people switch to good, organic premium goods, she says.

Reyes says Philippine fresh and processed food including canned meats and sets of restaurant meals as well as tropical fruits, seafood, and value-added marine products, have also gained a loyal following not only among Filipino communities abroad, but also from natives with preference for tropical cuisine.

THE PILI nut is the latest addition to RP food exported to Japan.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Friday, Oct. 27, 2006

ABC
Iba Tayo!
9 na lang ang bibida!
Linggo-Lunes 9PM
Philippine Idol

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Nickelodeon				PBA				Big News	PBA				Philippine Idol	Sentu	Real Stories		Araw-Araw Prem-yo Sa Hasbo	Letty La Mas Fea
ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Yakitate! Japan	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Idol (8:15 PM)		Maalaala Mo Kaya			Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		Fear		Lost (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season VI)		Roadmaster (Season I)		Worlds Apart		WRC 2006 Rally XS	E Buzz	Spider-Man					Panic Room
bTV				NBA Special		2006 Philippine Coll' Champs League Finals				2006 Philippine Coll' Champs League Finals				NBA Access	NBA Preseason: Nuggets @ Lakers				
Cartoon Network	My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Max Steel/The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy/Max Steel/The Gym Partner's A Monkey	Robotboy	Mirmo De Pon/The Simpsons-Tree House Of Horror/Mirmo De Pon	Pokemon The Johto Journey/Scooby-Doo & The Witch's Ghost/Pokemon: The Johto Journey	The Justirisers	Shaman King	Courage The Cowardly Dog/[illegible]/Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons	Aqua Teen Hunger Force	Gundam Seed	Shaman King/The Simpsons-Tree House Of Horror/Shaman King
Cinema One		Tiyanak				Kung Ako Na Lang Sana				Walang Iba Kundi Ikaw				Kamagong				Nasaan Ka Man	
Cinemax	Taking Lives (2:40 PM)				Implicated (4:20 PM)			The Making Of [illegible] 2	Komodo Vs. Cobra (6:25 PM)			Rage Of Honor			Housesitter			The Chronicles Of Riddick (11:15PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		The Closer		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Extreme Evidence	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		LO: Criminal Intent + Traffic		Prison Break	
Discovery Channel		Extreme Machines		Risk Takers		How Do They Do It	Mean Machines	Beyond Tomorrow		Rides		American Chopper		How Do They Do It	Mean Machines	Final 24		Crime Scene Psychics	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Shuriken School	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Emperor's New School/[illegible]/The Emperor's New School	America's Funniest Home Video	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies/Winnie The Pooh Spring Time With Roo	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		ESPN Great Outdoor Games				MLB World Series Game5							2006 Streetball	Sportscenter Asia	Classic Boxing		Classic Boxing		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Veronica Mars		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Everwood		American Dreams		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	The Good Code The Natural Law	Chaplet Of Mercy/Angelus	The Donut Man	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Backstage	The Gospel Of Life in Health	Defending Life	Life on The Rock Encore		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	Parable	EWTN Bookmark	St. Thomas Aquinas In Today's World	Fr. John Corapi	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Asawa Mo Man Ang Langit	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Pagbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Atlantika		Bakekang (8:50 PM)	Love Story In Harvard	Bubble Gang			Saksi
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Sue Thomas F.B. Eye		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Doc Martin		Midsomer Murders: Death And Dreams				Regenesis	
HBO			Darling Lili			The Notebook (5:15 PM)				Mchale's Navy (7:15 PM)				Constantine				Singles	
Hero TV	Combattler V	Sunny Pig	Last Exile	Mirmo de Pon	Sugar: A Little Snow Fairy	Naruto	Inuyasha	Saiyuki Gunlock	Full Metal Panic Fumoffu	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	Transformers Armada	Last Exile	Fortune Quest	B-Daman Bakugaiden V	Beyblade G-Revolution	Raijin-Oh	Combattler V	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics: Arts		EBC Earth Files		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics: Arts	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Karera Sports TV	
JackTV		Back Track				Sweat	X-Play	Heat		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hates Chris	Family Guy	American Dad	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Primetime Glick	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Design Remix	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	DIY: Jewelry Making	Food 911	Boy Meets Grill	Intimate Portrait		Clean House		Martha		Isaac		Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	The Great Adventure
MTV Philippines		MTV2: AFI Live	VH1 Fabulous Life: Celeb Kids		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV Hits			Get Spotted	MTV Hits	MTV Days		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV News	Rockola		MTV Hits
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Nat Geographic Specials		Extraterrestrial				Top 5		Nat Geographic Specials		Wow!		Martial Arts Week		Bin Laden's Spy In America			
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alap			Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Ric [illegible] & Angelique Lazo		GSIS Member's Hour		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Pagbubunyag		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold/The Fairly OddParents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Avatar Anime Fest: Avatar: The Legend Of Aang/Kappa Mikey		SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up/Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Trollz	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Tunay Na Kaibigan, Walang Iwanan				Hitman				Misis Mo, Misis Ko				Night Job				Lagi Kitang Mamahalin
Qtv	Starry Night	Samurai X	Battle B-Daman	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle		Ganda Ng Lola Ko		News On Q	Love Life		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Akayon News		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	NCIS		CSI: Miami		Without A Trace		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Shepherd's Voice		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports		Bikini Destination	Exotic Extreme	World's Greatest Auto Show		Raceworld		Billiards: US 9 Ball		Sagupaan	Gillette World Sport	Nopi Tunervision		Raceworld		Sportsdesk		Spanish League	
Star Movies	Undiscovered			Smothered (4:15 PM)			Garfield The Movie (5:45PM)			10 Things I Hate About You				Open Water			Frankenstein		
Star World	Two And A Half Men	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		The Apprentice		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		Third Watch		Special		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	Superman The Animated Series	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup	7th Heaven	Charmed (8:15 PM)		Ghost Whisperer (9:15 PM)		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		MYXilog

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Hopia man makes fire trucks run

BEING UNDER THE SUN INDEED HAS ITS benefits for Gerry Chua, president and owner of Eng Bee Tin, a Chinese deli famous for its ube hopias. Since he decided to switch to Sun Cellular, his business has seen significant upgrades in product quality and efficiency.

"Our products' freshness depends largely on prompt deliveries. And since we switched to Sun, any delay can be communicated immediately and our commissary responds within seconds. Our move has also given us more profits since we get to learn quickly as soon as there is a need to replenish stocks of our best-selling hopias in any of our stores," Chua says.

The deli's operations has also become more cost-effective with Sun's 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited Service, giving Eng Bee Tin's business a huge 70 percent savings on communication expenses. "Sun has definitely helped me save precious time and money."

And it does not stop there. In fact, Chua relies on Sun in his other passion and commitment—as brigade leader in volunteer firefighting work.

As president of the Association of Philippine Volunteer Fire Brigades Inc., Chua needs to be in constant communication with his staff. "We respond to different kinds of fire cases, for public assistance. My Sun Cellular phone keeps me informed of any disturbance happening around the metropolis."

He considers his phone one of his most important tools. "During a fire, life and property can be lost in a matter of seconds. That's why I have my Sun phone to alert the other volunteers right away," he explains. "Once the message is received, the firefighters spring into action."

His humanitarian efforts even led him to donate five firetrucks to the Binondo/Paco Volunteer Fire Brigade. "And since my company is famous for our ube hopias, the firetrucks we donated are all ube colored. Who says a fire truck has to be red, anyway?"

With Sun Cellular, Chua has definitely found the perfect communication tool. "The sirens of our ube-colored fire trucks can be heard wailing wherever needed. When every second counts, it's a good thing that Sun is there to alert the volunteers at a moment's notice. Now, the people in our community rest easy knowing that with Sun, the ube-colored firetrucks are merely a text away." He advises that his group can be reached through the TXTFIRE HOTLINE by typing REPORT <space> LOCATION and sending it to 0922-6-888-888.

Sun Cellular invests more than P11 billion a year to increase coverage and capacity.

GERRY Chua and his hopia ube-colored fire truck.

Going for number two

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

A BROADCASTING NETWORK CAN only grow its revenues so far.

There comes a point where advertising load hits its limit and advertisers are no longer willing to pay more to air their 15-second or 30-second commercials.

GMA Network reached that point last year and its solution to its happy problem was to put up another television station, which it called QTV or "quality television."

The next question that faced GMA was what kind of station will QTV be? How will it be different from the other stations, including GMA-7, and yet remain marketable to advertisers?

GMA Marketing and Productions Inc. president Manuel P. Quiogue tells INQUIRER that GMA explored several programming options.

First it looked at putting up an all-sports channel, but changed its mind when its research revealed that Filipinos only watched basketball.

Since another station had a lock on the Professional Basketball Association games and another had exclusive rights to the collegiate games, there was no point going into it, Quiogue says.

Then the station explored the possibility of developing an all-news channel, inspired by CNN and BBC.

Quiogue says the idea was again shot down because Filipinos only tune in heavily when there are disasters or when there are major political developments. Otherwise, they are happy with their variety shows and telenovelas.

In the end, it was the viewers who pointed GMA to the right direction.

"We noticed that over 60 percent of top advertisers are selling women's products," Quiogue says.

The top advertised products include Sunsilk, Crème Silk, Rejoice and Pantene.

"They advertise women's products because women are the decision makers and they usually decide what the family will buy for the home," he explains.

QUIOGUE

JIMENEZ

So GMA-7 decided to put up a station that will revolve around ordinary women and their needs.

QTV made its debut in November 2005 and it claims to have overtaken the other stations to become the third leading station in terms of program ratings, next to GMA-7 and ABS-CBN, in less than a year.

It attributes its climb to its programming, which it carefully tweaked to guard against "cannibalization" with Channel 7, or transfer of viewers from one station to another.

So instead of putting up a variety show to go head-to-head with GMA-7's Eat Bulaga, for instance, QTV developed a news program, to capture those viewers who would rather hear about the latest news than watch song and dance numbers.

QTV talk and public service shows, such as Moms and Women's Desk, on the other hand, are not centered on politics like those in the leading stations, but focus on women's issues.

Quiogue says it took a while for the leading advertisers to take a serious look at QTV but GMA enticed them to experiment by selling ad space at just 25-30 percent of the cost of the same space on GMA-7.

GMA senior vice president Joel G. Jimenez adds that GMA sat down with advertisers to look at the "creative execution" of their ads and brands in the programs, enabling them to get more advertising mileage from their budget.

"We create specialized promotions for our clients. We will create a music video or jingle if they want it," Jimenez says, "we create on-ground events where clients can participate."

Jimenez says QTV does its creative marketing campaigns for clients as it beefs up its programming with the entry of new shows, such as the hilarious Takeshi's Castle and reality show Extreme Makeover, as management dreams big dreams for the station.

"We were initially looking at becoming the third top station," Quiogue says, "now that we're there, why not go for number two?"

Why not, indeed.

Brand equity concerns for McDonald's, Coke, Boy Bawang ...

From page B2-4

"Coke." The Coke brand has a very strong equity revolving around its cola base. It's doubtful if consumers will find Coke's cola leaf base compatible with a drink that has a green tea leaf base. Of course, this likelihood should be measured in the name test I've referred to.

Q: My friend is with a local brand of snack known as "Boy Bawang." "Boy" is a common nickname here just like "Joe" is in the US. "Bawang" is garlic. So the Boy Bawang brand is literally equivalent to "Joe Garlic." But this is not a brand of packaged garlic. It's actually a packaged unpopped garlic-flavored corn snack positioned as "The Country's Favorite Snack." Some marketers say that Boy Bawang's brand equity problem is precisely in the brand name's reference to garlic instead of its corn base. Consumers still unfamiliar with the brand often ask what kind of garlic Boy Bawang contains. Do you think the company should bring in the word "corn" in both the brand name and in its positioning? How should it do this?

A: I don't think the company should worry that much about this omission. First, it has already a name that consumers have accepted. It's selling well. That's your most telling evidence of consumer acceptance of the name. So it should not change its name. Bringing in the word "corn" in its current brand name and in its positioning is a change and it is a perceptible change.

If this company wants to communicate explicitly its corn base and that garlic is only the flavoring, then it should do this not in its brand name but in the brand's packaging and its product literature to the trade and point of purchase. Hold onto the name because to most consumers it's a good name.

Q: There's a successful brand of fashion wear for the youth segment here known as "Penshoppe." It sells most of its fashion wear items in its own retail outlets. Shopper feedbacks frequency asked why the brand name has added "pe" to the word "shop" and why the brand had chosen "pen" for its first syllable when the word "wear" or "apparel" would have been more appropriate. After all, "pen" is about writing and not at all about wear. Should the Penshoppe people listen to this kind of customer feedback and do something about it?

A: In a way, this is similar to the Boy Bawang case. It's a successful brand and therefore has earned a brand equity. So don't change the name. It's already there and consumers in their minds have already given it a meaning. The association and meaningfulness that the company wants to own in the consumers' mind for the brand can be built even more with persistence over time. That's how an association and a meaning is owned: Just keep posting it.

If you think about it, the "pe" letters after the word "shop" actually lends the word a certain distinctiveness and memorability. The syllable "pen" isn't at all bad. It's a word that has little negative connotation.

Q: The way consumers pronounce certain brand names here present some selling problems. Two such names are cases in point. One is "Avon." In the southern regions, consumers pronounce this brand as "E-Bon." That's long "e" and "v" is pronounced as "b." The other is Gatorade which in some northern provinces consumers pronounce by its 4 syllables: "Ga-to-ra-de." Sales reps have asked Marketing if their radio and even TV ads should actually pronounce their brand as it's pronounced by the locals in the area. Sales say that they also would like to so pronounce their brand when their selling to current and prospective customers in the area. What do you think?

A: This is a minor problem and the companies involved should invest their time to more important issues. Of more importance is the question of brand loyalty, customer base expansion, brand positioning and the like. Marketing and sales should ask themselves if the way consumers are pronouncing their brands which differs from sales reps' pronunciation is in any way affecting brand loyalty, customer base expansion, brand positioning and so on. I suspect such difference has little to do with these more important matters. So let marketing keep pronouncing the brand names "correctly" and let sales keep on pronouncing just as correctly. In time, consumers will learn the "correct" pronunciation.

Keep your questions coming. Send them to us at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412. God bless!

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  - -Drinks courtesy of Jack Daniels, Jägermeister and San Miguel Beer.
  - -Specialty Drinks from San Francisco Coffee.
- **Feast for the Soul**
  - -Sound collage of bossa house.
  - -Soul Jive with DJ Rocky and Drizzel.
- **A Feast of Prizes**
  - -Special Gifts from L'Oreal and Siemens.

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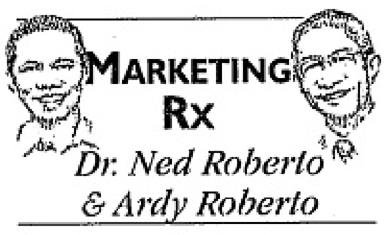
Brand equity concerns for McDonald's, Coke, Boy Bawang, Penshoppe, Avon and Gatorade



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto
& Ardy Roberto

HERE ARE THE QUESTIONS THAT marketing seminar students asked about brand equity which we threw to David Aaker, brand equity guru, during a Skype-aided interview, and his answers.

Q: Here's a brand equity concern of McDonald's. To communicate to the kids segment, McDonald's has added brand mascots. This is in addition to the Ronald McDonald mascot. It has now 3 more mascots, namely, Grimace, Birdie, and Hamburglar. Feedbacks from parents, mostly moms, told management that their kids get scared (from a scale of slightly to very) of 1, 2 or all 3 of these mascots. Top management seems set on pushing the three new mascots and wants its operations people to persist and go on to educate consumers about what they stand for. At the brand management level, managers just want to drop those three and go back to just Ronald. What do you think McDonald's should do?

A: Whoever has to make the decision here should consider first how excited top management is about the three new mascots in communicating the McDonald's image to moms and in strengthening the store relationship with kids. If research has told them that the three new mascots can become meaningful to both moms and kids, then it should proceed and continue and let PR take care of the moms whose kids get scared of the new mascots. The decision should also take into consideration of how damaging the resistance of the complaining moms can be. A carefully drafted acceptance promo campaign should help in this case. If the criticism persists, then a review should be in order.

I'm reminded of a similar reaction among moms to the Disney movie, Lion King. That was a really scary movie for children as far as moms were concerned. But with the creative PR and promo support, it came out as a successful movie. Kids eventually liked it. That's something to benchmark against and draw lessons from.

Q: The Coca-Cola brand in the Philippines has just been surpassed in Metro Manila unit sales by a natural green tea drink brand called C2. Coke is said to be seriously considering coming out with its own version of a natural green tea drink. But it wants to do this branding the drink as a "Coke" drink like "Coke Green Tea." Do you think extending the Coke brand name is a correct move in this particular case?

A: This largely depends on what can be the consumer response to the "Coke Green Tea" name.

Testing the new name should be able to determine this likely consumer response. But for this case, it should be better to have a new brand name independent of

BRAND EQUITY/ B2-3

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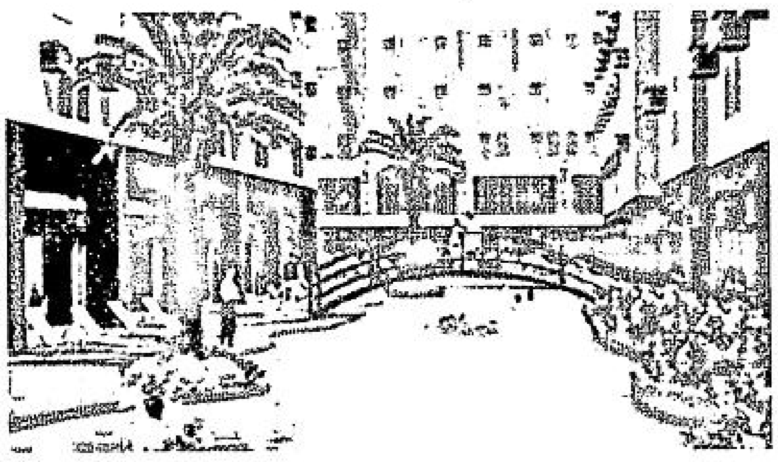
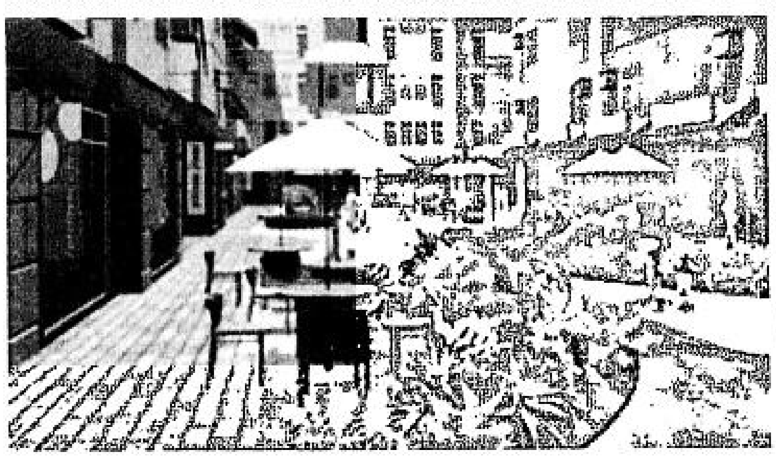


AT THE CENTER

At the Centropolis Communities, you are at the center of comfort and convenience. Located at the bustling city of Sucat Muntinlupa, the Centro is accessible to major points of destination in Metro Manila. It is strategically set between two major business hubs: the Makati Central Business District and the Filinvest Corporate Center.

Surrounded by large-scale commercial and institutional establishments, all routes provide easy access to all your necessities. The two major thoroughfares - South Super Highway and Sucat Road are easy routes to and from your points of origin.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED



If you're in for a shopping spree, it is good to know that rows of shops in a refreshing al-fresco setting are arranged right inside the enclave. Now you don't have to go too far to savor life's simple pleasures.

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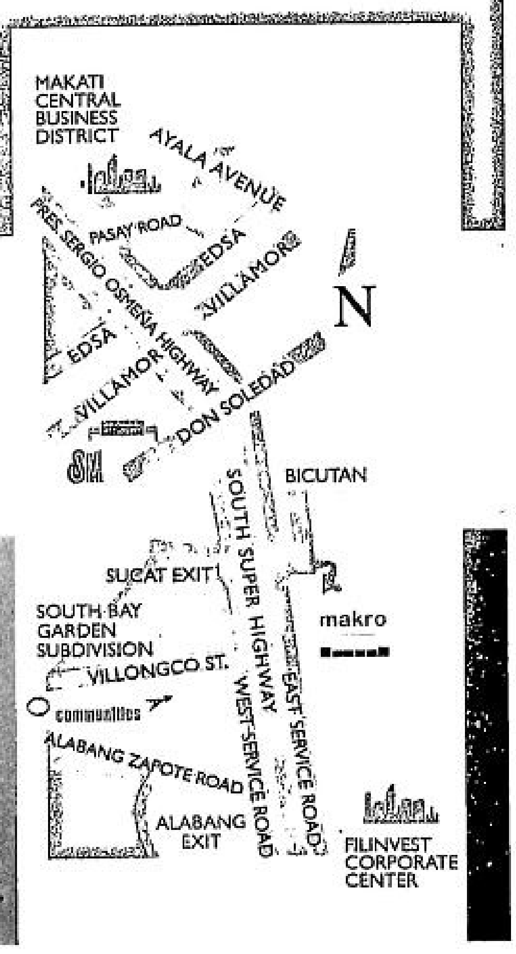
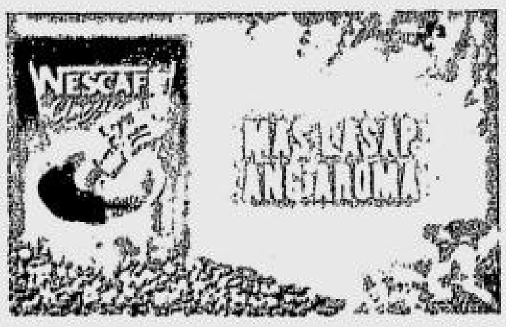


MAS AMOY ANG LASA
NEW NESCAFÉ

LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) **or email us at** lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph



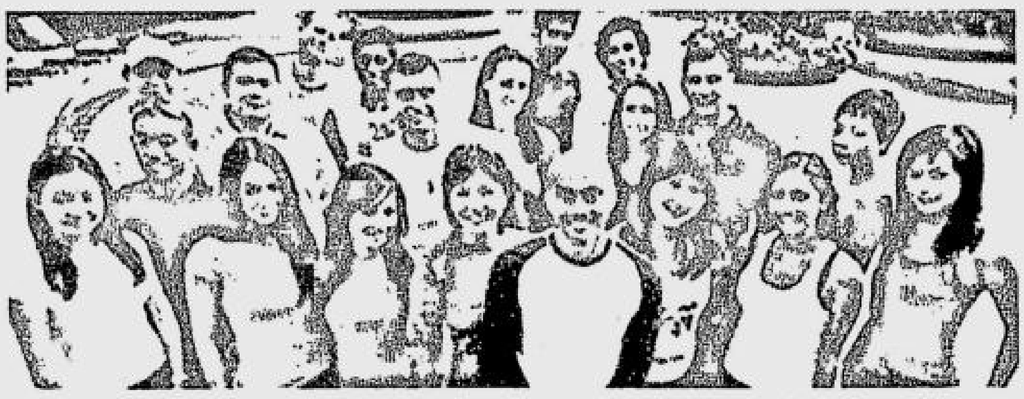
NESCAFÉ
MAS LASAP ANG AROMA

MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

LIFESTYLED
Thelma San Juan

People are talking about …

RAJO Laurel is among the designers coming out with a home collection.



"THE AMAZING Race Asia" is slated for broadcast on Nov. 9, 9 p.m. exclusively on AXN.

WE JUST THOUGHT OF RESUMING A POPULAR (some say nasty) habit we had years ago in the now-defunct Manila Chronicle: A weekly column called People Are Talking About … which was a grab bag of what people were really talking about, ranging from the trendy to the nasty. It got to a point where people would clip and send it to relatives abroad—their way of keeping their kin in step with what was going on.

Anyway, this is what I've heard people are talking about …

… The forthcoming birthday celebration of Iñigo Zobel in Boracay where the Zobel couple has a resort home on a hill overlooking the beach. No less than 300 people, we heard, have been invited. That should change the island's demographics (and psychographics?) even for only a weekend … The impending visit of the young Dalai Lama, preparations for which are feverishly but quietly accelerating … Skinny, skinny pants are all over, as if leggings aren't challenging enough to wear.

Fashion designers coming out with home lines, organic colors, Cebu in December…

'Going home'

… Also, brown, mushroom brown and other organic colors. Randy Ortiz dressed Trisha Chua, Romina Urra Gonzales, Luis Espiritu in brown at last Monday's Metrowear … Fashion designers are rolling out their home lines. Rajo Laurel launched his homeware line. Frederick Peralta is unveiling his couture beddings tomorrow for SM. Frederick even designed the Softee tissue.

… Cebuanos are pulling out all the stops for the Asean Summit in December, to be held in the country's power capital in the South. We were at Shangri-La Mactan over the weekend for the Metro Society anniversary party held on the beachfront, and met up with good friends like Marissa Fernan, Philip Rodriguez, Arcy Gayatin, Marco Protacio (looking so trim), Nelia Neri, Elvira Luym, Jaime Picornell, Mila Espina (who just did a play on St. Exequiel, who, she swore, was the miraculous saint for those ailing with cancer).

There will be fashion shows (Philip is staging his collection), and posh island accommodations and activities for the Asean leaders and their spouses. Shangri-La Mactan's general manager Tim Wright and PR Sharon Samarista are caught in the frenzy. Shangri-La now has only one tennis court, since its other two courts are being turned into a vast tent to accommodate more than 600 people for various functions.

Garden stylist

That weekend, Ernest Santiago was there. Not so well known is the fact that Ernest "styles" Shangri-La Mactan's landscape. He promises to do some wonders for the Asean visitors.

Going back to the Society beachside party, when I asked Raul Manzano why people weren't hopping over to the dance platform, the light-hearted editor said, "I just discovered that Cebuanos preferred to dance right in their place, not on the dance floor." (You learn one new thing every day.) …

It was surprising to see advocacy columnist Toti Villalon, of all people, partying on that beachfront. He reminded us that his roots were in Cebu, that he now flew home regularly, in part because of his venture with Landco. He has both hands tied to a splint. Can't use them, thus the absence of his column here. He was a victim of "Milenyo." He was seated at the Willow Court at Manila Polo Club at the height of the storm, when the glass window shattered and showered him with shards of glass.

We truly believe the culprit was the wind, not his anti-Polo Club columns …

Amazing racers

Magazine publisher Ernie Lopez and wife Jeena made it to the Amazing Race—a feat unknown to their family and friends until the trailer started running on AXN last week. The extreme-sports-loving couple were that successful in keeping the news under wraps.

Ernie finally admitted to us last week that he was in Amazing Race when he went on leave months ago, never in Africa like he told us. (It pays not to believe all that your boss says.) This young Lopez couple must be the most athletic

PEOPLE/ C3

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See flyers for details. Promo is from October 27 to December 15, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4228, Series of 2006.

PROST! German Club president Thorsten Franz, German Ambassador Axel Weishaupt, The German Club of Manila Oktoberfest chair Albert Robert, Mandarin Oriental Manila's Helmut Gaisberger and Pasay City Acting Mayor Allan Panaligan

MANDARIN Oriental's Donna Lampano, Charisse Chuidian and Peter Scholz

PAL'S Ronnie Caadan and Ray Talavera

Germans roll out the barrel for Oktoberfest

STANI Zimmer and Albert and Margaret Robert do a festival dance.

LUFTHANSA'S Simone Pflueger

MAI Gaa, Herbert Hatzle, Florian Gaa and Malou Hatzle

MANDARIN Oriental general manager Helmut Gaisberger and DOT assistant secretary Cynthia Carrion

SHARBETTE Schmitz

SMB'S Eliza Rivero and Asia-Pacific Kora Packmat's Jochen Scheil

BABY Arenas and Micheline Jess

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

THE ELEGANT MANDARIN ORIENTAL Manila, with the popular German Club of Manille, dahlings, staged the biggest, most authentic and smashingly successful Oktoberfest celebration in the Philippines.

For the two-night Oktoberfest 2006, a fab Bavarian brass band was specially flown in from Munich.

Beer flowed endlessly for this biggest outdoor festival that also featured a lavish all-night buffet of German yummies prepared by the hotel's executive chef, **Thomas Wenger**, and his superb team. There were exciting raffle prizes, wild beer drinking, yodeling, "schuhplatter" (as in Bavarian shoe dance), and dancing to the music of the 11-piece brass brand, Bavarian Sound Express, till way, way past the crowing of the roosters, *palanggas*.

On the second evening, the German Club raffled off round-trip business-class tickets from Manille to Germany via the reliable German airline Lufthansa, natch!

On the first evening, the vivacious, adorable Assistant Secretary for Tourism **Cynthia Carrion** (representing Tourism Secretary **Ace Durano**) joined the hotel's popular, well-loved **Helmut Gaisberger** in the tapping of the barrel signaling the official opening of Oktoberfest 2006.

"Together with the German Club of Manila, which also celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, we are most delighted to have presented yet another Oktoberfest, which captures Germany's traditional and biggest merrymaking event. This authentic German festival draws millions of people from all over the world to Munich," said Gaisberger, *palanggas*.

Moi had been to Munich's renowned beer fest while living in Europe, together with glam gal **Vicky Zubiri** and ace photographer **Alex Van Hagen**, and believe me, it's one totally awesome event you'll never, never forget, *meine liebsten* (as in my *palanggas*). Prost!

The hotel's fun "oompapa" happening was supported by Siemens,.Lufthansa German Airlines, Lufthansa Technik Philippines, The Lifestyle Network, The Philippine Star, San Miguel Corp., What's On & Expat, and PGA Cars Audi.

Valentine gift

It may be five months away, *palanggas*, but the way the days zoom by, faster than you can bat an eyelash, it will soon be Valentine's Day... again. But the whole year can also be a season of hearts and love, dahlings.

With this in mind, distinguished jewelry maker, Rafael Jewellery, launched another stunning masterpiece in keeping with its world-class stature: the fab Queen's Heart collection, featuring a remarkable, internationally patented heart-shaped setting, formed by two half moons, and princess cut.

The entire collection consists of quality stones and has earned the International Gemological Institute's prestigious Certificate of Excellence, no less.

The super high-profile event was held at the grand ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel, *palanggas*. Packing the venue were tons of jewelry lovers, heavyweight business hotshots, even *tres visible* politicians and Manille's creamiest of the cream.

But the biggest attraction after the Queen's Heart was **Jacob Rachmany** himself, inventor and patent holder of this famous design. He is president and CEO of J.R. Diamond International Ltd., an illustrious member of the Israeli Diamond and Precious Stones Exchange, among others, *palanggas*.

Highlight of the evening was a dazzling fashion show. Models, all wearing eye-catching Escada gowns, showed awesome pieces from the Queen's Heart collection.

Unbelievably huge price cuts on gorgeous premium items and discount packages were offered. Needless to say there was a mad rush to pluck out the best from the best, dahlings.

Check out the Queen's Heart Collection at Rafael Jewellery stores or call 6363399 and 8138501. The collection is a dazzler, *palanggas*!

Two birthdays

Fresh air and lush greenery give a cool, pleasant ambiance to the sprawling country retreat of former Batangas Governor (and consul of Palestine) **Tony Leviste**, venue for the fab birthday lunch he hosted for his darling champion equestrienne daughter, **Toni**, and his close pal, **Nedy Tantoco**, who had just jetted in after months in New York and Europe, *palanggas*.

Among the chosen invitees were charming British Ambassador **Peter Beckingham** and his super nice wife, **Jill**. The ambassador said, as he relaxed in a picturesque setting, "I must say, it's like being at home in Sussex."

One of Cosmo Manille's favorites, Ambassador **Ignacio Sagaz** of Spain, with his wife **Aurora Lapuz**; and Saudi Ambassador **Mohammed Ameen Wali** were glad to be able to chill in the country, away from our town's madding pace, *palanggas*.

Ambassador Wali received an enthusiastic round of applause when Tony L. mentioned: "I'm seriously considering sponsoring the Arabian horses that my daughter Toni plans to ride when she competes for the Philippines later this year at the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar."

In honor of the diplomatic set and the birthday celebrators, natch, Tony served a yummy buffet of Filipino fare, superbly whipped up by **Celia Leviste** and daughter **Charlie**.

The fun day was further enhanced by a serving of magic in the inimitable style of the host himself, *palanggas*.

Among the other close pals who were there were Store Specialist's **Anton** and **Nina Huang**; **Michael Huang**, who is taking a break from his stay in Beijing, with his love, pretty **Kathy Yap**; **Charlie Leviste-Antonio**; **Patrick Jacinto**; socialite **Diana Jeanne Lopez**; the host with the most, **Ado Escudero**; and **Tina** and **Rupert Jacinto**, *palanggas*.

TONY Leviste, Ambassador Mohammed Ameen Wali of Saudi Arabia, and celebrator Nedy Tantoco

JOIE Leviste-Mangubat and husband Joey

BERGAMO'S Mel Meer, Bulgari's Mario Katigbak, celebrator Toni Leviste, Kathy Yap and her man, Michael Huang

AMBASSADOR Peter Beckingham of Great Britain; Ambassador Ignacio Sagaz of Spain and wife, Señora Aurora Lapuz S.; and Madame Jill Beckingham

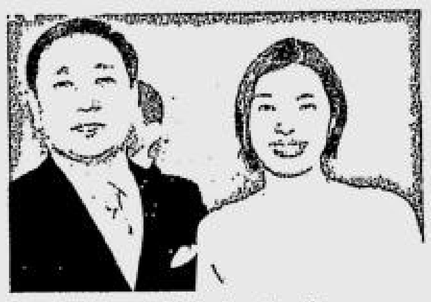
JACOB Rachmany, Queen Heart owner; Raffy Florencio, Rafael Jewellery president; and models

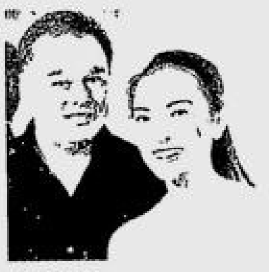
MIA Florencio, Liza Gokongwei, Ligaya Salonga, Lea Salonga-Chien and Robert Chien

RAFAEL Jewellery's Kat Florencio

BUBUT de los Santos, Cely Manas, Cora Florencio and Bia Berlongan

DAUGHTER and mother Rose and Charito Montenegro


MIGUEL and Christine Aguiluz


EMMY Ravano and Badette Barbers

FLORENCE Ko and Suiping Par

GLORIA Chico, Arnold Vegafria, Mons Romulo Tantoco and Danny Chico

Hair-raising fun at Camp Eerie's Halloween

KIDS will be treated to hair-raising fun at Nickelodeon's Camp Eerie, 10 am-12 midnight, Oct. 31, at The Music Hall, SM Mall of Asia. Highlights include "Spook-tacular" live shows. SpongeBob SquarePants and Patrick Star will drop by. Buy a minimum of P1,000 worth of toys at Toy Kingdom and Toy Express in SM Mall of Asia and get one free ticket for two. Toy Kingdom is giving away 100 tickets while Toy Express has 50 tickets on a first-come-first-served basis. Nickelodeon Camp Eerie is presented by Toy Kingdom and cosponsored by Nestle Cookie Crisp, Jack & Jill Chooey, Everyday Ascorbic Acid Ceelin, Nestle Chuckie together with media partner K-Zone.

GOINGS ON

NEW COLLECTION. Dockers San Francisco will launch its 2006 fall-holiday collection Oct. 27 at Mezze, Greenbelt 2. Also to be launched is a new print advertising campaign. The ad campaign features unique images and the romantic lifestyle in San Francisco.

Dockers' fall-holiday collection features neoclassic designs, a blend of modern and traditional for a new classic look with a luxurious, elegant appeal.

EXCLUSIVE OFFER. The Sony Ericsson P990i is available in an exclusive offer from MasterCard until Nov. 19. Cardholders who charge the mobile phone to their Platinum, Titanium or Gold MasterCard get a free Bluetooth headset HBH-PV700. Participating outlets include Sony Ericsson concept shops; Avant in Greenbelt 4; Abenson in Glorietta 1, Eastwood Libis, Robinsons Galleria, Shangri-La Plaza Mall; Ambassador in Shangri-La Plaza Mall and Park Square 1; Automatic Centre in Glorietta 4, Gateway Mall, Festival Supermall and SM North EDSA; Comcenter in Park Square 1, Market! Market! and SM San Lazaro; Semicon in Cyber One Mall, SM Southmall, The Podium, Power Plant Mall, SM Centerpoint, SM Fairview, SM Megamall and SM North Edsa; and Western Marketing in Pasay Road, Makati and SM Megamall.

SPECIAL OFFER. Sun Cellular's Group Plans let subscribers get three postpaid lines and three free handsets for as low as P699 a month.

Subscribers can get three Nokia 1112 handsets, with an option of Daylite Call and Text Unlimited, at P233 per line monthly. Three Nokia 2310 handsets are available at a monthly group plan subscription fee of P999. It comes with a suggested unlimited service option of 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited and free 750 text messages to other networks. It just can't get any better than this. So hurry to The Sun Shop near you and avail yourselves of Sun's incredible Group Plans. Call Sun's hotline, 3958000.

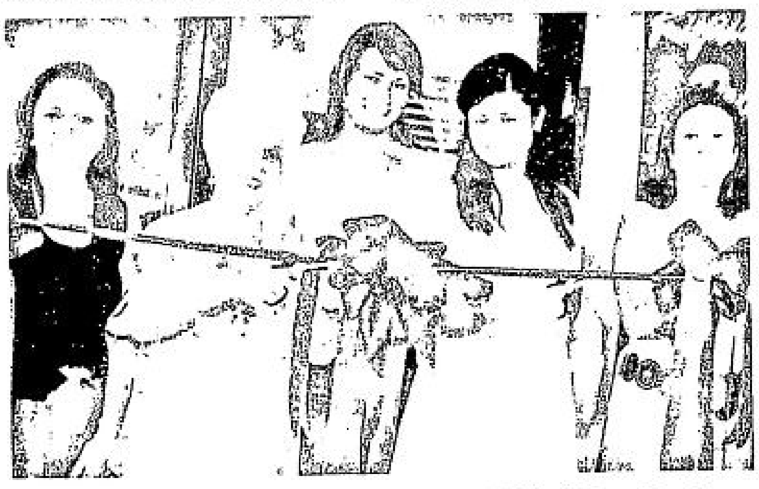
HALLOWEEN PARTY. Stir Crazy Cafe Bar and Restaurant presents "Stir Ghost Crazy Halloween Party," 7 p.m., Oct. 27, at Unit 109 Tycoon Center, Amethyst Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 6311245.

THEATER ZONE. Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall opens its all-new Theatre Zone. Consisting of six cinemas, Theatre Zone has the widest cinema screen ever, and is the first in the Philippines to offer state-of-the-art Dolby Digital Surround E-X Sound System. Each theater accommodates a maximum of 500 people. The Theatre Zone also houses Cinema Snack Bar, Burger Bucket, Shakey's, McDonalds, DDNC and Figaro Coffee Co. Call 6815251.

WORKSHOP FOR ADULTS. A creative writing workshop for adults (21 years and above) will be offered weekends of November and December. The workshop will focus on writing styles and will involve writing activities. Conducted by writer-book author Visitacion "Chit" de la Torre, the workshop will run for six sessions (9:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.). Call Tower Book House tel. 8154938 or 8156925 or visit its office at Windsor Tower, 163 Legazpi Street, Legazpi Village, Makati.

BAZAAR. GMA Kapuso Network holds the Sixth Noel Discovery Bazaar and Christmas Shopping Expo Nov. 24-26 and Dec.21-23 at the World Trade Center. Noel Bazaar will offer over 500 products, fashion lines, holiday food gifts, Christmas décor, novelty items, rare and exclusive pieces. The annual bazaar benefits the GMA Kapuso Foundation, Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation and Associate Missionaries of Assumption Foundation. Call 6870654, 6873292 or e-mail cut@pldtdsl.net.

REUNION. Iloilo City High School Class of 1969 will hold its alumni homecoming on June 30-July 1, 2007 in Iloilo City. Call Elizabeth Arguelles-Patriarca at 09193991809.



RYAN the Prince Salon opened recently at 7611 Dela Rosa St., Caeg Bldg., Makati (0918444706/09274176673). The ribbon-cutting ceremony was led by Armida Siguion-Reyna, Maricar Sobrepeña, Susie Bayot-Ortigas, Alexandra Madrigal-Eduque. Other guests were Chuchu Eduque, Terri Madrigal, Marivic Ortigas-Borromeo and Mary de Leon Rufino.

BARANGAY Kaligayahan's Diamond Sierra Madre in Quezon City held recently its oath-taking. In photo are, standing from left, directors Duds Yabes, Sammy Reinoso, Alex Hidalgo, Gener Bituin, Resty Dela Cruz, Francisco Maestro, engineer Francis Canares, engineer Ted Custe, engineer Eugene Fajardo, Bert Lantin, president Febkanoi, and Jun Selda, adviser. Seated from left: Victor Trinidad, Gloria Olaiver, Sammy Vergara, Aurora Guanzon, Capt. Rey Miranda, Recy Beltran and Ruben del Rio.

People are talking about …

From page C1

and energetic pair we have around.

In the latest issue of Metroactive, Jeena recalls how she did wakeboarding in Camarines Sur, in the best cable park in the world. In one stint, she had her 5-year-old son on her lap as she skimmed the water.

Of course, another amazing thing was how Ernie's mom, Chita, did it herself—more smoothly than anybody else, on her first ever attempt. She's in her 70s …

… I Can Serve Foundation's so successful Tickled Pink bazaar at Rockwell two weekends ago. This highly dynamic group organized by and for breast cancer survivors drew people from across the social and power spectrums, to buy fashion items from specialty designers and brands.

Saturday and Sunday, shoppers for a cause strode to the Loft that was decked out to look like a flea market—with a difference: There was breathing space. The white and pink motif was visually soothing to begin with. Pink lanterns adorned the place. There were lamp posts, like in a promenade. Fitting rooms were like a boudoir.

I Can Serve's founder Kara Alikpala tapped her friend Joseph Claraval to style the place. According to Kara, costume jewelry from Cebu exporters and by breast cancer survivor Betting Osmeña and fashion brands were the top sellers, including the new homegrown line Veronica's Closet.

Back on the scene

… Speaking of cancer survivors, people are happy to see Margarita Fores back on the scene after treatment for thyroid gland cancer at Stanford. The treatment was successful but, even better, is Margarita's refreshing and inspiring view of life now.

She could only chuckle now as she recalled the days she was "quarantined" in a hospital room during her radiation treatment: Nobody could come close to her or touch her lest they got contaminated. She was like a walking "Day Glo," was her funny way of putting it.

Looking at her pose for a Society cover, it was obvious she now wore the surgery scar around her neck like a badge—or neckpiece—of courage. One good thing is, Margarita is not only brave, she's truly happy. Having your loved ones around you is the best cancer cure. Science can't do better.

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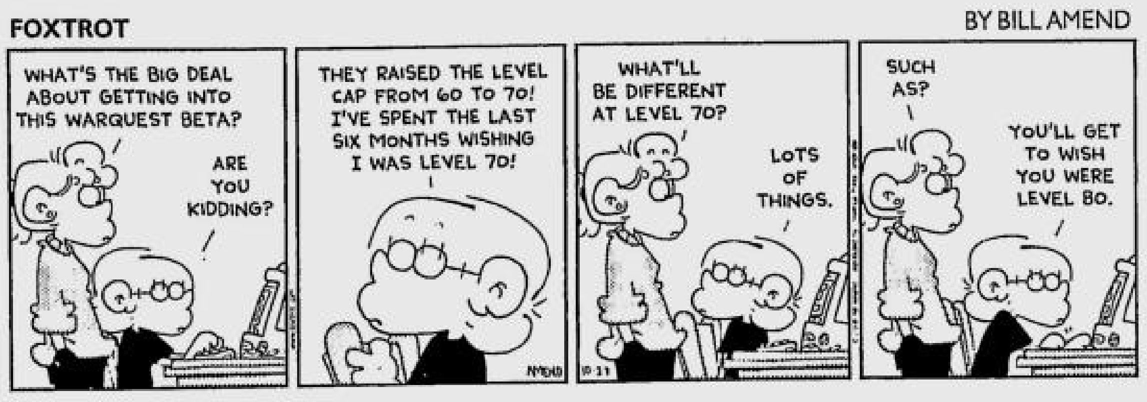
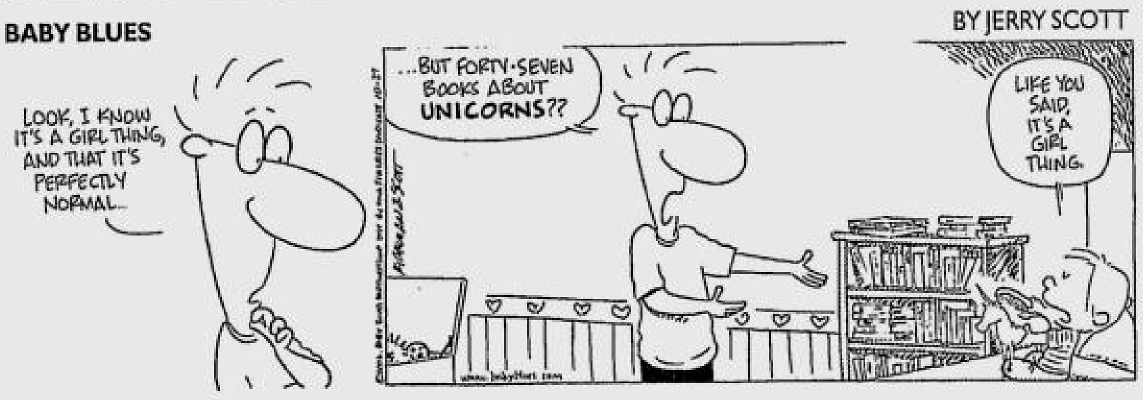
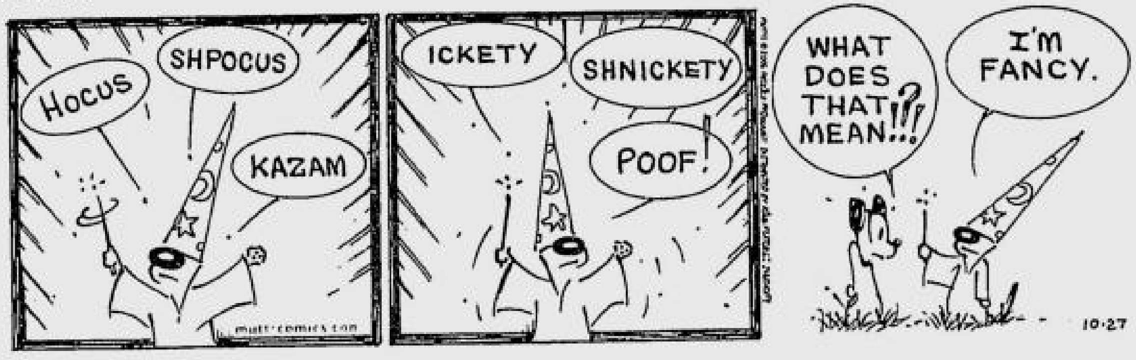
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT GETTING INTO THIS WARQUEST BETA?
ARE YOU KIDDING?
THEY RAISED THE LEVEL CAP FROM 60 TO 70! I'VE SPENT THE LAST SIX MONTHS WISHING I WAS LEVEL 70!
WHAT'LL BE DIFFERENT AT LEVEL 70?
LOTS OF THINGS.
SUCH AS?
YOU'LL GET TO WISH YOU WERE LEVEL 80.

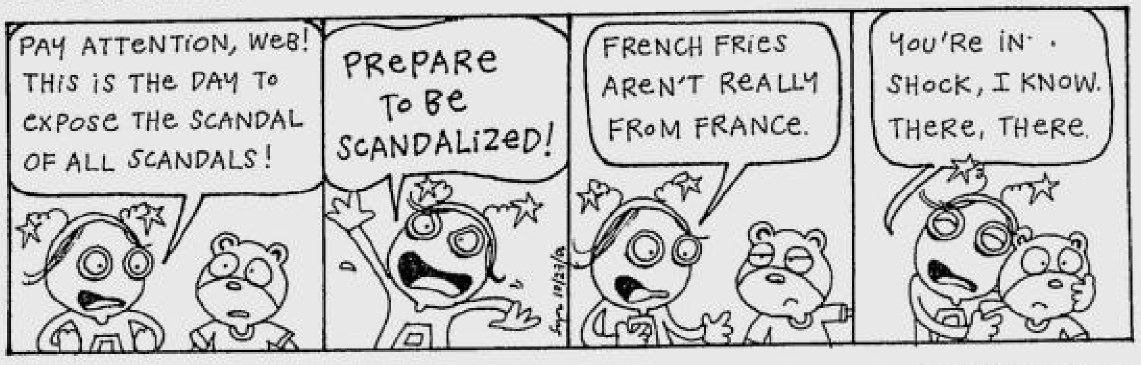
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


LOOK, I KNOW IT'S A GIRL THING, AND THAT IT'S PERFECTLY NORMAL...
...BUT FORTY-SEVEN BOOKS ABOUT UNICORNS??
LIKE YOU SAID, IT'S A GIRL THING.
www.babyblues.com

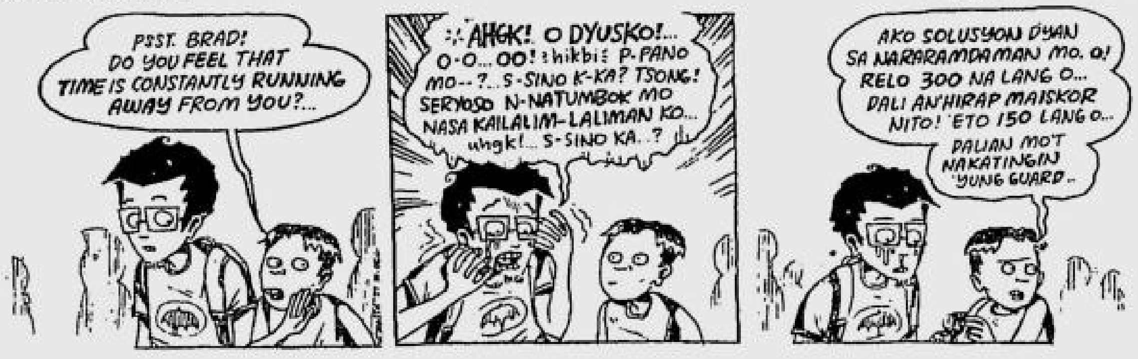
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HOCUS
SHPOCUS
KAZAM
ICKETY
SHNICKETY
POOF!
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN!!?!?
I'M FANCY.
mutts comics.com
10-27

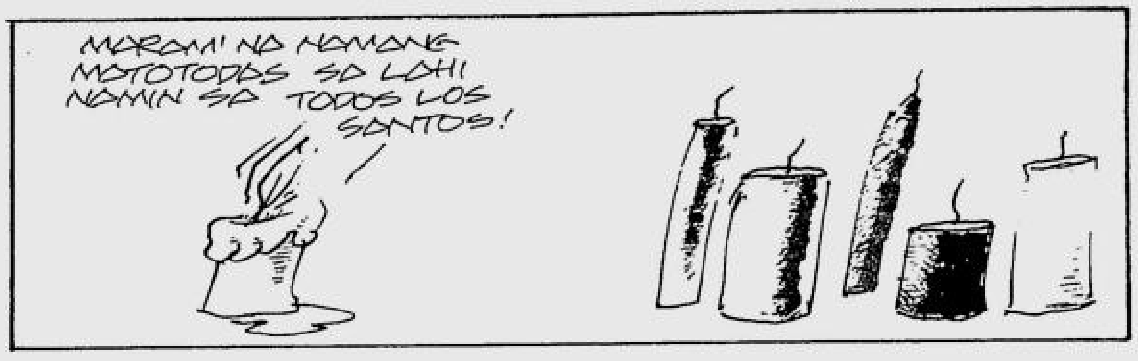
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


PAY ATTENTION, WEB! THIS IS THE DAY TO EXPOSE THE SCANDAL OF ALL SCANDALS!
PREPARE TO BE SCANDALIZED!
FRENCH FRIES AREN'T REALLY FROM FRANCE.
YOU'RE IN SHOCK, I KNOW. THERE, THERE.

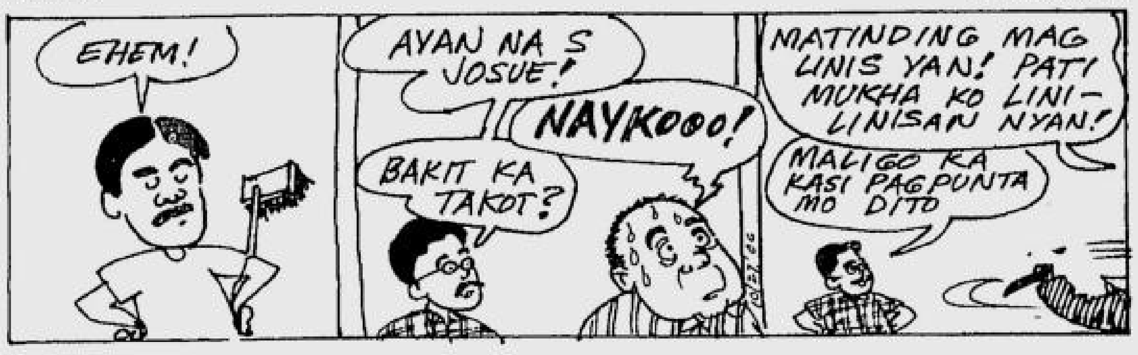
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


PSST. BRAD! DO YOU FEEL THAT TIME IS CONSTANTLY RUNNING AWAY FROM YOU?...
:.: AHGK! O DYUSKO!... O-O...OO! :hikbi: P-PANO MO--?..S-SINO K-KA? TSONG! SERYOSO N-NATUMBOK MO NASA KAILALIM-LALIMAN KO... uhgk!... S-SINO KA..?
AKO SOLUSYON DYAN SA NARARAMDAMAN MO. O! RELO 300 NA LANG O... DALI AN'HIRAP MAISKOR NITO! 'ETO 150 LANG O...
DALIAN MO'T NAKATINGIN 'YUNG GUARD..

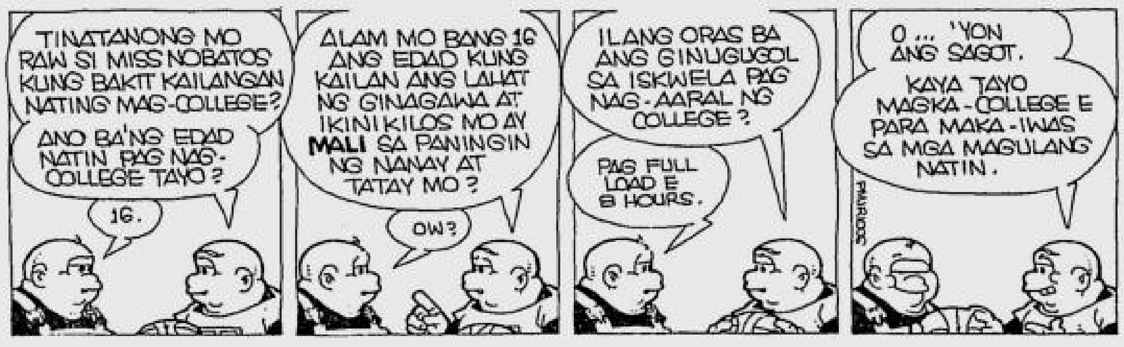
TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


MARAMI NA NAMANG MATATODAS SA LAHI NAMIN SA TODOS LOS SANTOS!

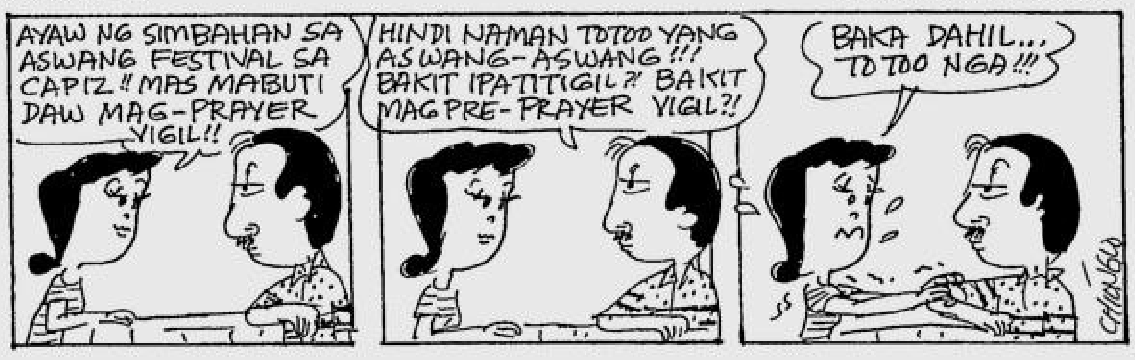
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


EHEM!
AYAN NA S JOSUE!
NAYKOOO!
BAKIT KA TAKOT?
MATINDING MAG LINIS YAN! PATI MUKHA KO LINI-LINISAN NYAN!
MALIGO KA KASI PAG PUNTA MO DITO

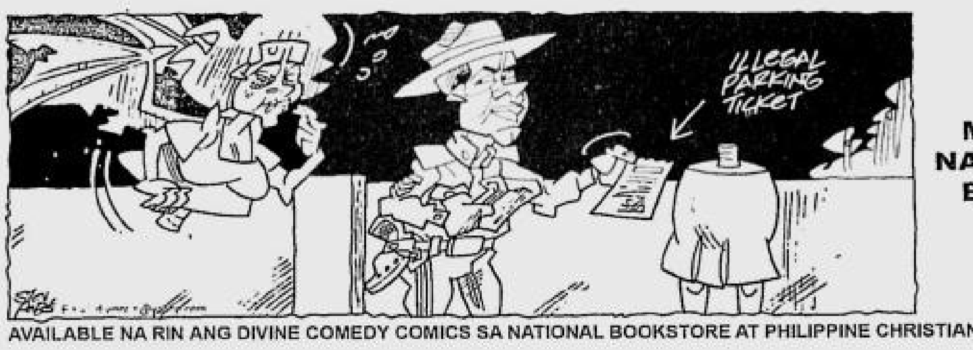
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


TINATANONG MO RAW SI MISS NOBATOS KUNG BAKIT KAILANGAN NATING MAG-COLLEGE?
ANO BA'NG EDAD NATIN PAG NAG-COLLEGE TAYO?
16.
ALAM MO BANG 16 ANG EDAD KUNG KAILAN ANG LAHAT NG GINAGAWA AT IKINIKILOS MO AY MALI SA PANINGIN NG NANAY AT TATAY MO?
OW?
ILANG ORAS BA ANG GINUGUGOL SA ISKWELA PAG NAG-AARAL NG COLLEGE?
PAG FULL LOAD E 8 HOURS.
O... 'YON ANG SAGOT.
KAYA TAYO MAGKA-COLLEGE E PARA MAKA-IWAS SA MGA MAGULANG NATIN.

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


AYAW NG SIMBAHAN SA ASWANG FESTIVAL SA CAPIZ!! MAS MABUTI DAW MAG-PRAYER VIGIL!!
HINDI NAMAN TOTOO YANG ASWANG-ASWANG!!! BAKIT IPATITIGIL?! BAKIT MAG PRE-PRAYER VIGIL?!
BAKA DAHIL... TOTOO NGA!!!
CHIONGLO

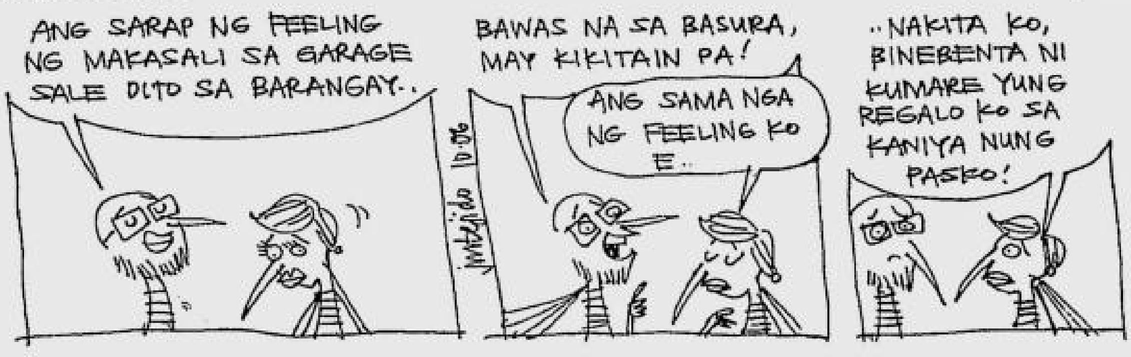
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ILLEGAL PARKING TICKET

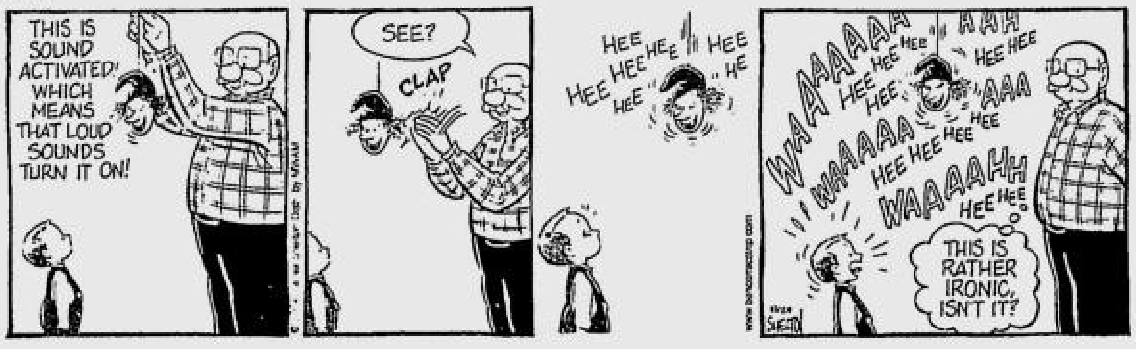
MANA-NANGGAL BLUES

AVAILABLE NA RIN ANG DIVINE COMEDY COMICS SA NATIONAL BOOKSTORE AT PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG SARAP NG FEELING NG MAKASALI SA GARAGE SALE DITO SA BARANGAY..
BAWAS NA SA BASURA, MAY KIKITAIN PA!
ANG SAMA NGA NG FEELING KO E..
..NAKITA KO, BINEBENTA NI KUMARE YUNG REGALO KO SA KANIYA NUNG PASKO!

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


THIS IS SOUND ACTIVATED! WHICH MEANS THAT LOUD SOUNDS TURN IT ON!
SEE?
CLAP
HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HE
WAAAAAAA AAAH HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE WAAAAA AAA HEE HEE HEE WAAAAHH HEE HEE
THIS IS RATHER IRONIC, ISN'T IT?

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Brine-cured cheese
5 Number one
10 Declared
14 Swear to
15 Tense situation
16 Ex-Yankee Martinez
17 Hack
19 Language of Pakistan
20 Fur-trade pioneer
21 Scorches
23 Band booking
24 Big ___, CA
26 Hack
28 Gymnast
32 Pester
33 Bishopric
34 Preschoolers' center
38 Hack
44 Added bubbles
45 Lennon's lover
46 Pickpocketed
49 Returns into custody
52 Hack
56 Puppy bite
57 Internet add.
58 Strongboxes
60 Use credit
64 Engrave with acid
66 Hack
68 Jai ___
69 Actress Samantha
70 Classic Chevy
71 Daily Planet reporter
72 Work stations
73 Weight-loss plan

DOWN
1 ___ morgana (mirage)
2 Le Gallienne and Gabor
3 Printed matter
4 Melodic passage
5 HST's predecessor
6 Writer Murdoch
7 Spoke wildly
8 Cover with goo
9 Hang around
10 R-V contents
11 Pneumatic shooter
12 Deep blue
13 Soft and heavy
18 Beat up
22 Say "Boo!" to
25 Speed checker
27 SSS designation
28 Dunderhead
29 Company VIP
30 Gridiron zebra
31 Scarlett's home
35 Still
36 Talkative trucker
37 Shakespearean forest
39 Fine-grained mineral
40 Calendar parts
41 Heyerdahl's ___-Tiki
42 Ill. neighbor
43 Figs.
46 Shrill sound
47 Snapping reptile
48 Container with a spout
50 ___ en scene
51 Tack on
53 Made chitchat
54 Old enough
55 Ice masses
59 Location of Mt. Rushmore
61 "The Time Machine" people
62 Campbell of "Scream"
63 Confound it!
65 Broadway smash
67 Timecard abbr.

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
14				■	15					■	16			
17				18						■	19			
20					■	21				22	■	23		
■	■	■	24		25	■	26				27			
28	29	30				31	■	■	■	32				
33			■	■	34	35	36	37				■	■	■
38			39	40								41	42	43
■	■	■	44							■	■	45		
46	47	48			■	■	■	49		50	51			
52					53	54	55	■	56			■	■	■
57			■	58				59	■	60		61	62	63
64			65	■	66				67					
68				■	69					■	70			
71				■	72					■	73			

By John Underwood
New York, NY
10/27/06

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

A	C	R	E	S	■	S	O	N	G	■	S	K	I	S
G	L	E	A	M	■	T	H	O	R	■	P	I	C	A
R	A	N	G	E	■	A	M	M	O	■	E	W	E	R
A	D	O	L	L	A	R	S	A	V	E	D	I	S	A
■	■	■	E	L	S	■	■	D	E	R	■	■	■	■
M	A	R	■	S	T	A	B	■	L	A	T	T	E	R
O	R	E	S	■	E	P	E	E	■	S	A	U	N	A
D	O	L	L	A	R	E	A	R	N	E	D	B	U	T
E	M	A	I	L	■	D	U	N	E	■	S	E	R	E
M	A	Y	D	A	Y	■	T	E	R	N	■	R	E	D
■	■	■	■	M	A	E	■	■	V	O	L	■	■	■
S	E	L	D	O	M	V	I	C	E	V	E	R	S	A
L	A	I	R	■	M	A	D	E	■	I	N	A	L	L
U	R	S	A	■	E	D	E	N	■	C	I	V	I	L
G	N	A	W	■	R	E	S	T	■	E	N	E	M	Y

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HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're bright, mentally astute and extremely lively. You're also impulsive. You often have strong reactions to events because your emotions are intense. You like to encourage others. (But you often shock them.) Sometimes you don't know how powerful and influential you actually are. This year you will wrap up something you've been involved with for about nine years.

Birthdate of: John Cleese, actor; Fran Leibowitz, writer; Theodore Roosevelt, 26th US president.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Romantic situations are very warm and affectionate today. You might easily feel a heartfelt connection to someone.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today is the time to mend broken bridges with others. Both parties will feel warm and loving. People are in a forgiving, tolerant mood today.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Coworkers are wonderfully supportive today. You enjoy interacting with customers and anyone connected with your daily activities. Buy something to improve your health or aid your digestion.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Financial speculation is favored today. This is also an excellent day to buy artistic items for your own pleasure or for an investment. New romance can blossom. Existing relationships will sweeten.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is an excellent day for real estate and also for family gatherings. Enjoy entertaining at home. Family businesses can flourish as well. Buy art for where you live.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your sunny disposition and optimism attract others to you today. People enjoy your company today because they like your positive attitude. (Laughter is like sunshine in the house.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a good day to try to get a raise or to boost your earnings in some way. You might also want to spend money on yourself or loved ones.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a great day to get out and socialize! You can renew contacts and friendships today. You easily attract others to you because you're so warm and friendly!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Make plans for your next move, be it related to your career or your home situation. Solutions about the care of others (especially aging parents) might occur to you today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Feelings of affection and warm appreciation arise easily in all your dealings with others, even if you're talking to casual acquaintances or members of groups. You appreciate what others have to offer

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Now is the time to talk to the chief. People in power are receptive to what you have to say. Just be yourself. Imagine your objective and visualize achieving it.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Travel plans and matters related to schools and education will go well today. Business connected with publishing and the media will also be profitable and positive.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

							6	2
	4	6	9	5				8
	5		7					
	6	7						
	2						9	
						4	1	
					1		4	
5				4	8	6	2	
8	9							

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 10/27

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

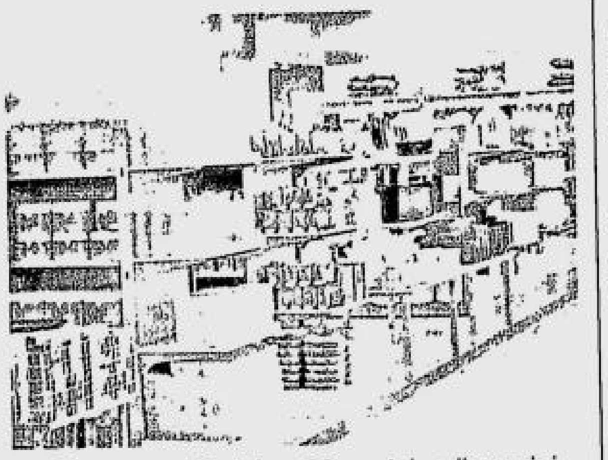
4	7	1	5	8	3	2	9	6
8	5	2	6	1	9	7	4	3
6	9	3	4	7	2	1	8	5
9	6	7	1	2	8	3	5	4
2	8	4	9	3	5	6	1	7
1	3	5	7	4	6	9	2	8
7	1	9	8	6	4	5	3	2
3	4	6	2	5	1	8	7	9
5	2	8	3	9	7	4	6	1

Difficulty Level ★★★

GET READY FOR A BETTER SHOPPING EXPERIENCE!

Robinsons Department Store (RDS) is giving you more reasons to shop at its bigger and better branch at **Robinsons Place Lipa**, Batangas City. With a bigger floor area, surely RDS will be able to cater to all your shopping needs. Choose from a wide selection of merchandise for ladies, men, kids and the home. And find something you like at the new snacks and music sections.

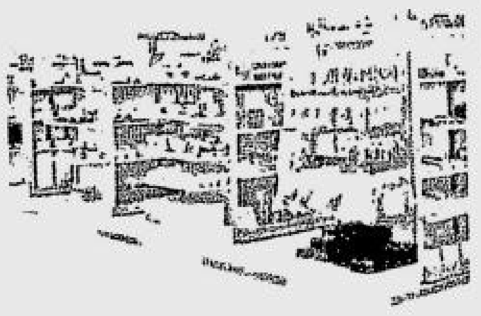
Visit RDS today, October 27, for great prizes and freebies! This weekend, get a chance to win gift certificates every hour for every P300.00 purchase. Shop more and you may win one of nine Motorola V3 RZRs from October 27 to November 12. And beginning today, for a minimum purchase of P500.00, RDS gives you a free gift.

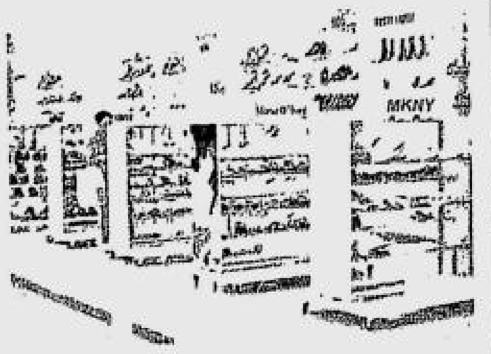


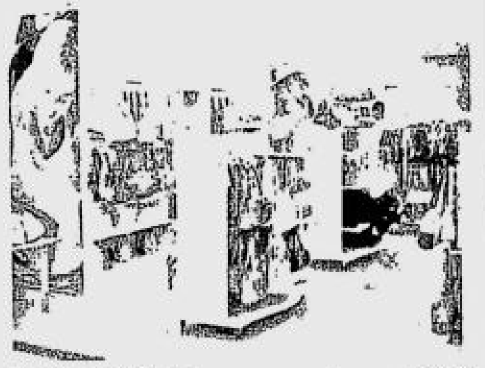
Tomorrow, October 28, watch a live mini-concert by the R&B Prince, Jay-R at the activity area of Robinsons Place Lipa. After the 3:00 PM show, Jay-R will visit Robinsons Appliances, Handyman Do-It-Center, Robinsons Supermarket, and finally Robinsons Department Store for autograph signing sessions with lucky shoppers.

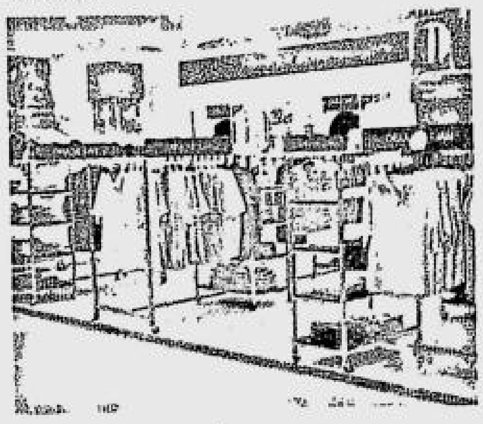
These will definitely give Batangueños more reasons to shop at Robinsons Department Store! So rush to RDS at Robinsons Place Lipa now for a better shopping experience.

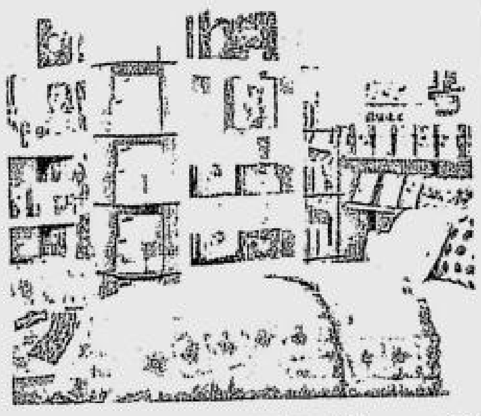
Robinsons Department Store











More Reasons to Shop

at Robinsons Place Lipa
NOW BIGGER & BETTER!

100
500
100
500
Robinsons
Robinsons Department Store

Get a chance to

WIN!

P1,000 worth of Gift Certificates EVERY HOUR

From October 27 to 29
for every P300 single or accumulated receipt purchase

A total of 9 WINNERS

3 Motorola V3 RZR EVERY WEEKEND

For every P300 purchase entitles you to join from Oct. 27 to Nov.12

DRAW DATES:
October 28 to 30
November 4 to 6
November 11 to 13

PLUS!

FREE GIFT!

For a minimum of P500 single receipt purchase

Promo period is from October 27 - November 24

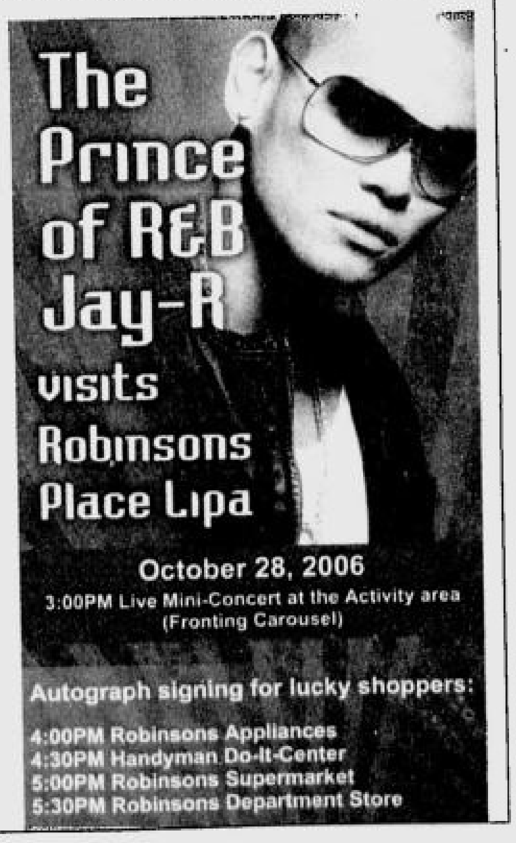
Per DTI-BATANGAS-Permit # 296 Series of 2006

ROBINSONS Place LIPA

www.rds.com.ph

See mechanics posters for details

Robinsons Place Lipa, Old National Hi-way Mataas na Lupa, Lipa City


The Prince of R&B Jay-R visits Robinsons Place Lipa

October 28, 2006

3:00PM Live Mini-Concert at the Activity area (Fronting Carousel)

Autograph signing for lucky shoppers:

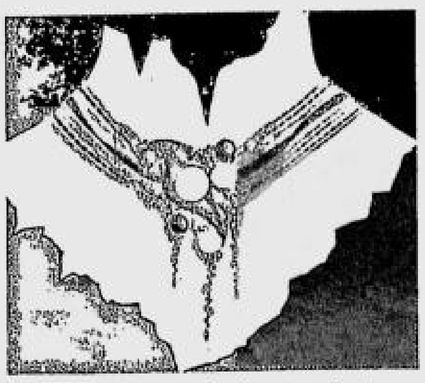
4:00PM Robinsons Appliances
4:30PM Handyman Do-It-Center
5:00PM Robinsons Supermarket
5:30PM Robinsons Department Store

2nd RP Jewelry Design tilt finals

SEVENTEEN OUT OF A TOTAL OF 250 entries have emerged as the major contenders for the final leg of the 2nd Jewelry Design Competition organized by the Guild of Philippine Jewelers Inc. (GPJI).

The competition, which was launched by the guild and supported by Pearl2, PhilExport, Sterling Gifts Inc., Jewelmer, Discovery Suites, Hoseki Pearl, BPI Foundation, M. Lhuillier Jewellers, focused on the theme of "Philippine Nature" and challenged both novice and veteran jewelry artists to craft creative and innovative pieces that showcased the best of Filipino talent.

"This year's competition was marked with an overwhelming number of entries. And we were also impressed with the quality of the designs submitted and the participants themselves," said Jay Camus, chair of the design competition and GPJI director.


"ANI" celebrates the bounty of nature.

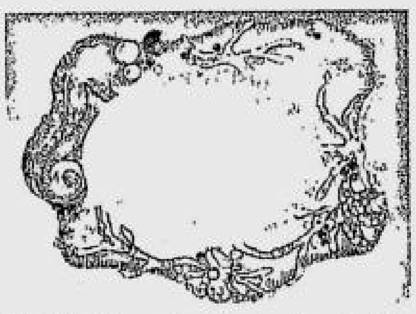
Camus revealed that this year's competition was expanded to accommodate entries from students, professionals, individuals, companies and organizations with no previous connection or experience in the jewelry industry. Thus the guild hopes to unearth fresh new talent from a greater pool of young Filipino talent.

The prestigious judging panel was composed of national artists Salvador Bernal and Ramon Orlina, jewelry designer Fai Co, interior designer Tessa Prieto-Valdes and DTI-Citem officer-in-charge Ambet Burgos.

Three will be named winners; each will receive P20,000 and a trophy. The grand-prize winner will receive P30,000.

Announcement of the winners will be next month.

Call GPJI at gpjewels@globelines.com.ph or 7281722-26.


"ABYSS" bangle presents the depth of the sea.

Fashionably preppy

THE DOROTHY PERKINS Fall-Winter 2006 Collection presents jersey dressing as a wardrobe essential, in black, white and gray colors, accentuated with red, green and purple.

For career women, there are pencil skirts cut high above the waist and cropped jackets. Dresses are back with high necklines, billowing sleeves, and pinafore styling with a retro twist. Must-have outerwear include cropped coats and tailor jackets, from dog-tooth to plaid.

The distinct look of the '60s is reborn with black-and-white herringbone shift dresses, bright berry-colored wool pea coats and cream high-waisted belted trenches. The romance of the 17th century surfaces in luxurious velvet and satin.

Checkered woolen mini skirts come with frills and flirty net underskirts. Sequined beanie hats and pink mohair berets accentuate the preppy look.

Patent accessories are all the rage, with chain handle bags and wide-waisted leather belts that finish off the "schoolgirl" chic.

Dorothy Perkins is distributed in the Philippines through Robinson's Specialty Stores Inc. and Arcadia Group of the United Kingdom. Dorothy Perkins stores are in Robinsons Galleria, Power Plant Mall, The Podium, Glorietta 3, and SM Mall of Asia.

HOUNDSTOOTH swing coat, black pencil skirt

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Ziyi Zhang is wearing new moisture extreme ™ in Windsor Rose.
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LIFESTYLE
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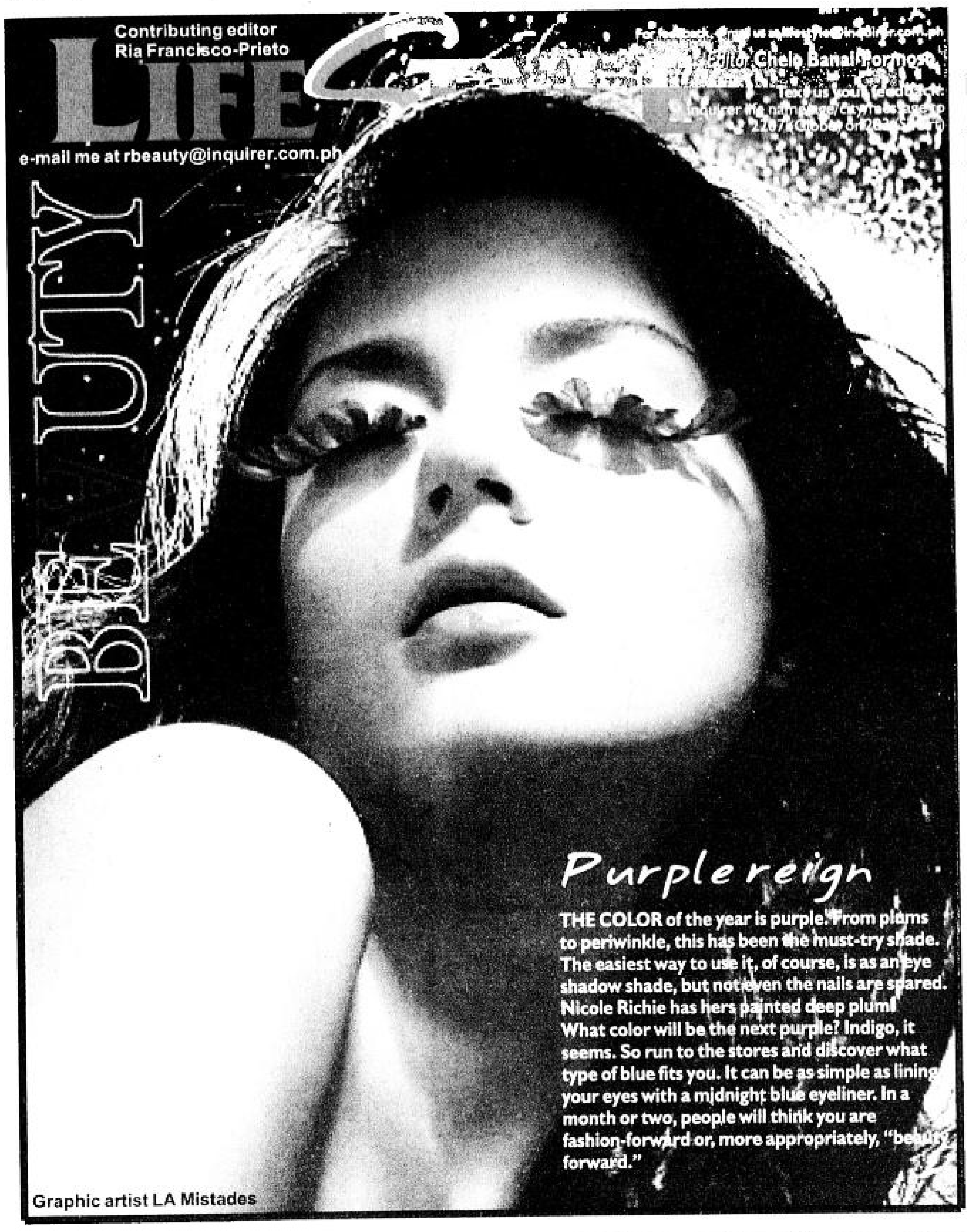
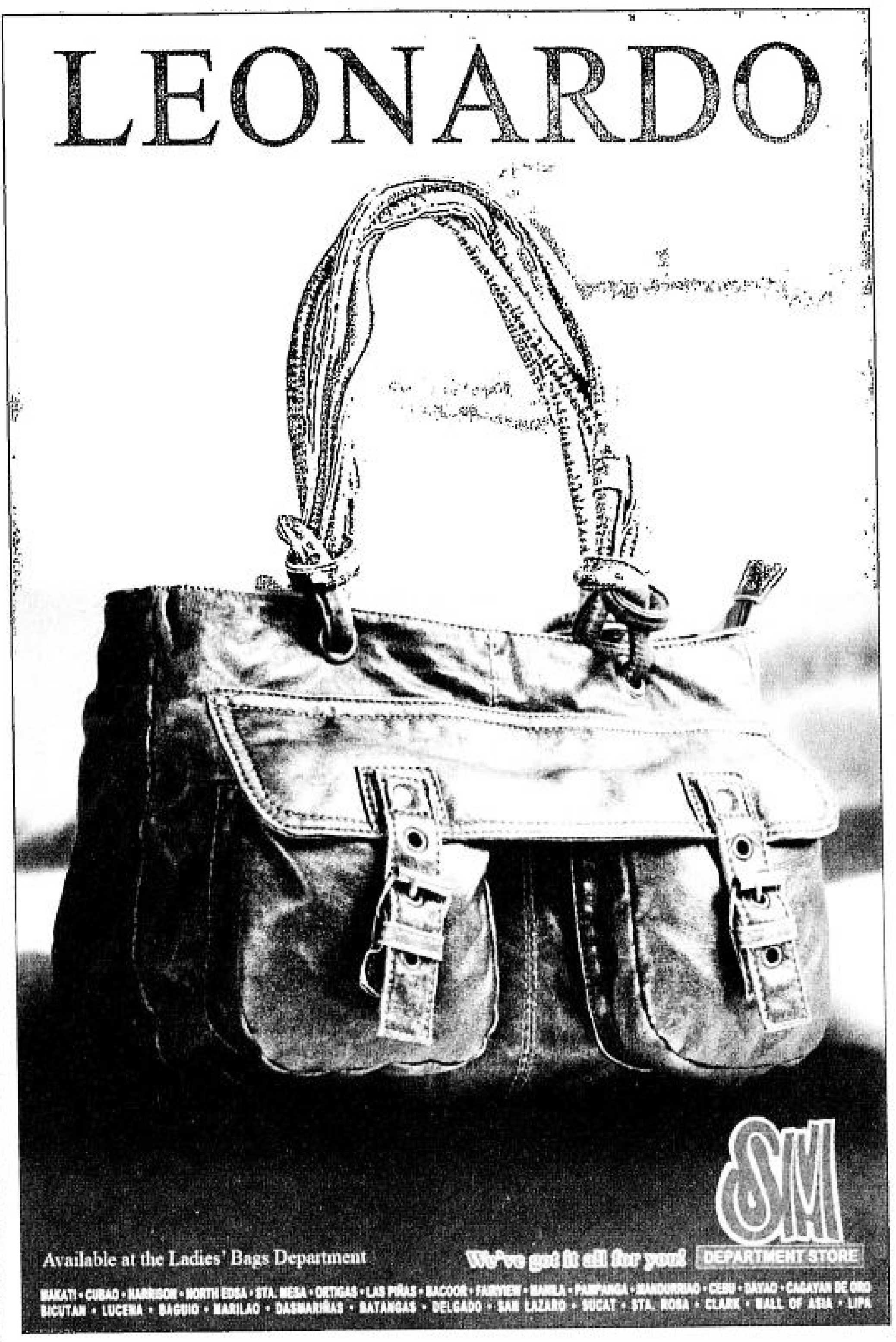
Text us your feedback: [illegible]



Purple reign

THE COLOR of the year is purple. From plums to periwinkle, this has been the must-try shade. The easiest way to use it, of course, is as an eye shadow shade, but not even the nails are spared. Nicole Richie has hers painted deep plum! What color will be the next purple? Indigo, it seems. So run to the stores and discover what type of blue fits you. It can be as simple as lining your eyes with a midnight blue eyeliner. In a month or two, people will think you are fashion-forward or, more appropriately, "beauty forward."

Graphic artist LA Mistades



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Beauty beat

Here are some of the memorable shoots and stories we've done this past year

WHAT IS BEAUTY?

According to Encarta, it is 1) the combination of qualities that make something pleasing and impressive to listen to or touch, or especially to look at; 2) personal physical attractiveness, especially with regard to the use of cosmetics and other methods of enhancing it; 3) a beautiful woman or girl; 4) something very good, attractive, or impressive of its kind; or 5) an attractive, useful, or satisfying feature.

Our beauty section turns one year this week, and among the five definitions of beauty, I would like to think we have been working mostly on number 2.

Personal physical attractiveness is the one thing that gets me, since we are all really beautiful in our own ways. And yes, we can enhance or play up what we have through the use of cosmetics or skin care products.

Here are some of the memorable shoots and stories we've done this past year.

Heavy metals

THIS came out in our December issue. Metallics have been such a big thing this year, and they're expected to be so for many more months. In fact, mixing gold and silver will be highly fashionable.

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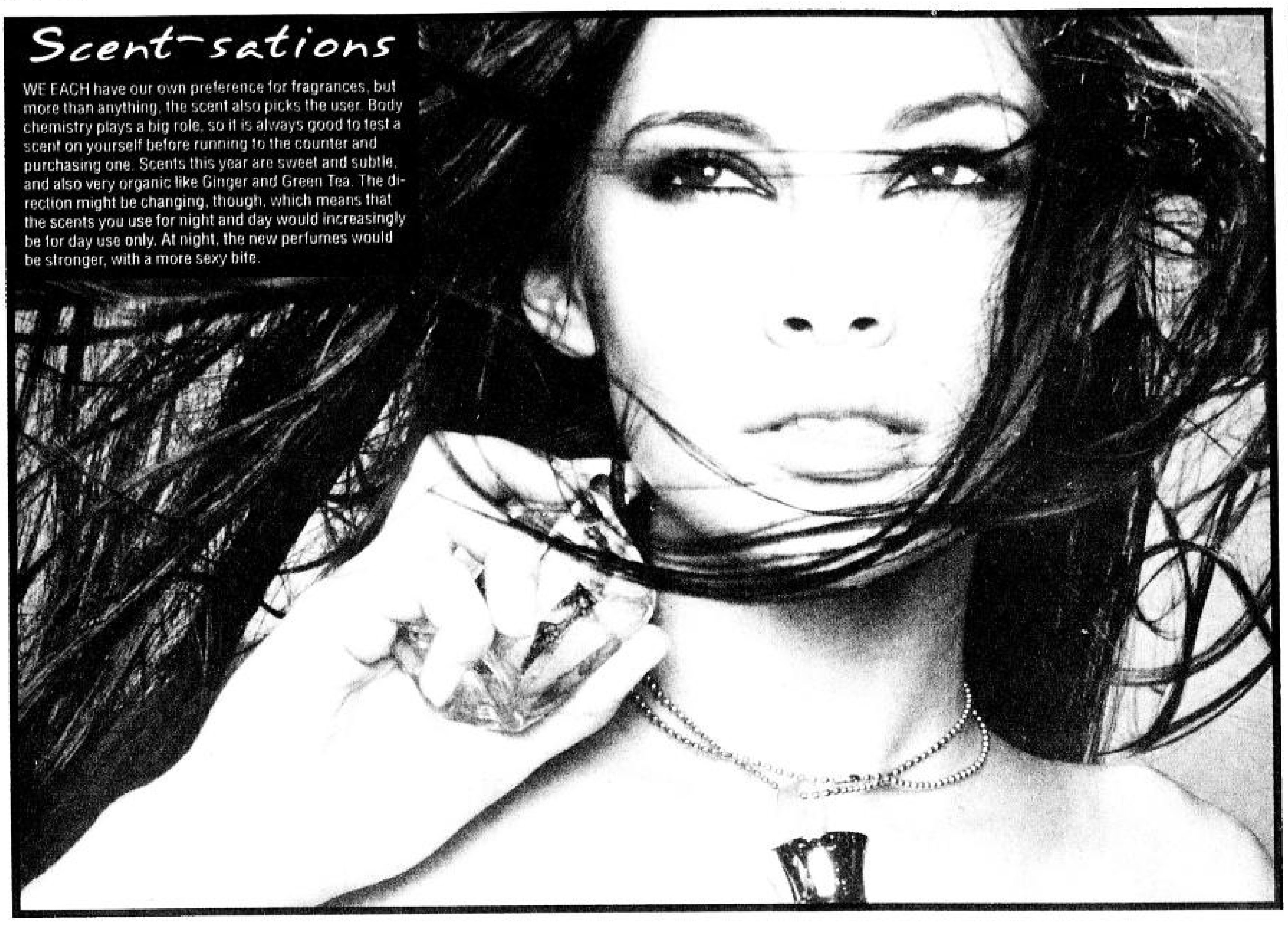


Scent-sations

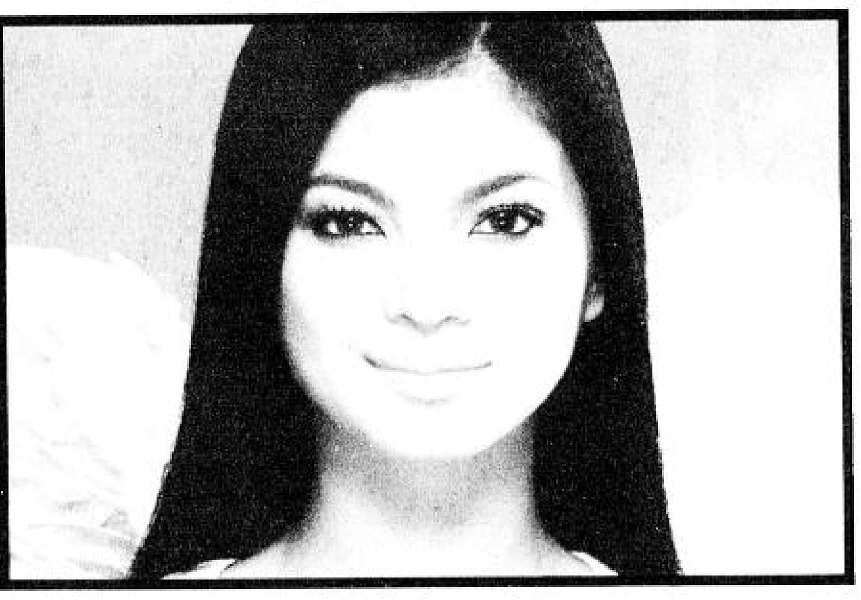
WE EACH have our own preference for fragrances, but more than anything, the scent also picks the user. Body chemistry plays a big role, so it is always good to test a scent on yourself before running to the counter and purchasing one. Scents this year are sweet and subtle, and also very organic like Ginger and Green Tea. The direction might be changing, though, which means that the scents you use for night and day would increasingly be for day use only. At night, the new perfumes would be stronger, with a more sexy bite.

Ageless beauties

A GRAND way to welcome antiaging regimens and creams, which really exploded this year. When the story of La Prairie's Anti-Aging Cream came out on this page, the store sold out its stock that very day, and a lot of orders were placed. This was a real shocker to me, simply because this particular brand doesn't come cheap. But it also proved that Filipinas know the importance of taking care of one's self. Now I believe Filipinas look young not only because we are Asians, but mainly because we take better care of ourselves.

Beyond trends

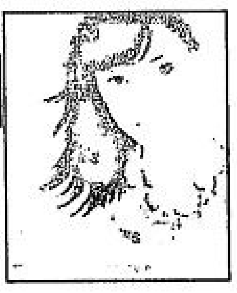
WHEN we interviewed Angel Locsin, one of the hottest stars today, she proved that simple natural beauty would always be hot.



Beauty beat

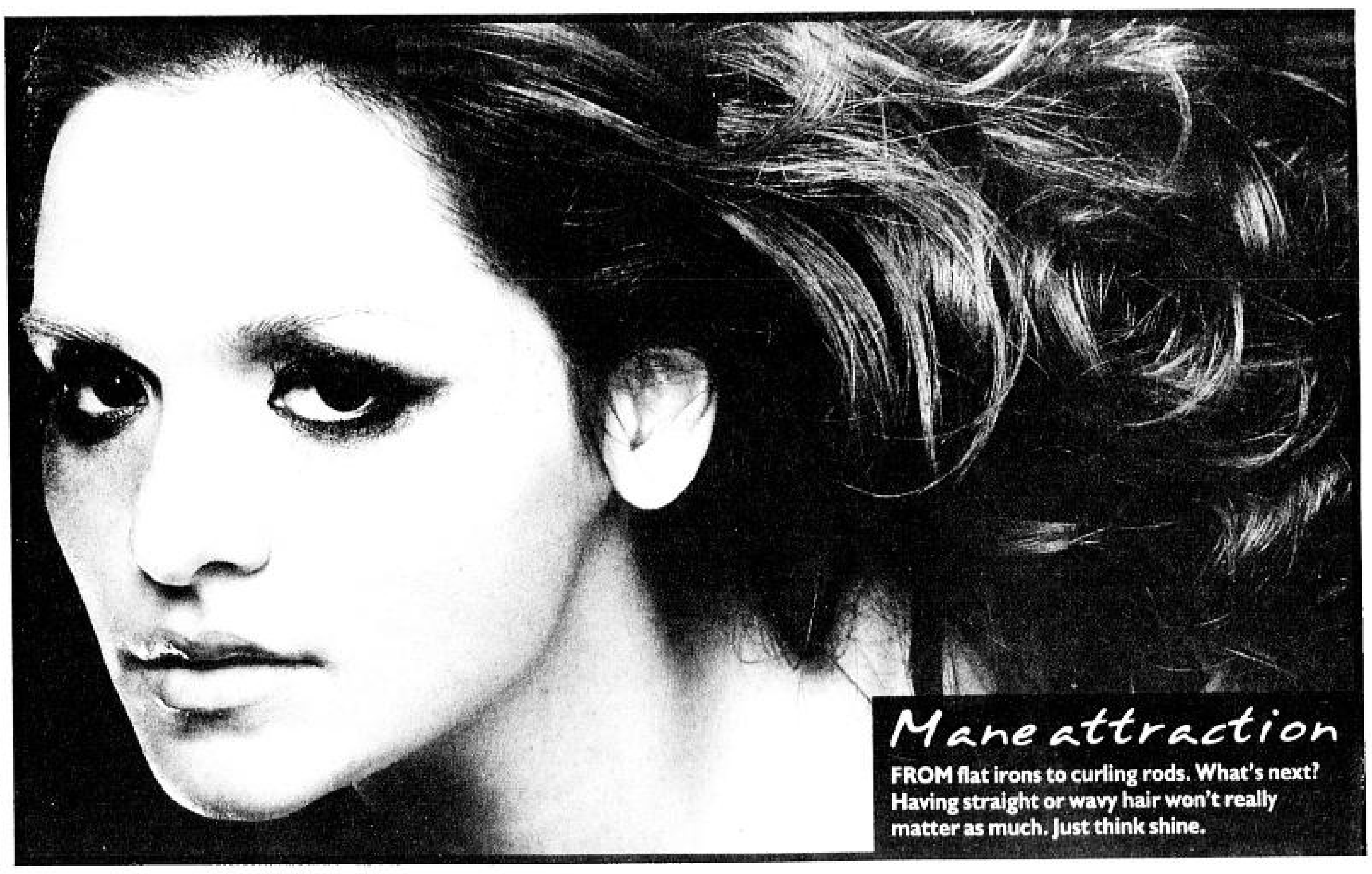
KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto



Beauty queen

THE INTERVIEW with Miriam Quiambao was a success. Proof? I received a lot of mail that simply said they enjoyed it. So, from now on, we will have a story along the same vein that will come out twice a month, care of Marta Araneta. She will go around interviewing real people and spilling the beans on their beauty secrets. These should be fun and easy reads, plus lots of products will be rediscovered.



Mane attraction

FROM flat irons to curling rods. What's next? Having straight or wavy hair won't really matter as much. Just think shine.

Premium skincare products

Here are three skin treatment offerings that command steep prices but promise superior results

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

IF YOU ARE AGAINST SPENDING ON skincare products that command prices in the five-figure mark, skip this article entirely. Those who choose to proceed, well, you have been forewarned.

Now that we've got that out of the way, here are three premium skin treatment items that fight the aging process by stimulating our skin's fibroblasts (that collagen-producing factory), enhance skin cell metabolism and boost the immune system. This time, I will mention the testimonies of other people, as well as facts from studies conducted for each company, all in a four-week time span.

Guerlain Orchidee Imperiale Exceptional Complete Care Fluid 30 ml. (P13,888). At this price, this beauty item is approximately cheaper by P6,000 compared to the original cream version.

On 32 women who used the products twice a day for a month under the monitoring eye of a dermatologist, these are the results.

Clinical tests highlighted a 50-percent reduction in wrinkles and fine lines. A personal observation: The fluid is more watery in texture, so it is designed for those with oilier skin and perhaps a younger target market. The cream is more suitable for warmer weather.

Unlike the cream that does not require extra eye cream, the fluid may make you reach for the Issima Success Eye Tech (P3,550) which minimizes wrinkles as well as lifts and firms up the eye area.

On 60 women who evaluated their own results by measuring the fluid's results against their former skincare products: Firmer skin with smaller pore appearance—80 percent, fresher, supple, perfectly moisturized skin—85 percent, more radiant complexion when makeup free—80 percent, softer and more velvety texture—90 percent.

Lancome Secret de Vie (P14,995). This particular cream is targeted for women who simply want the best skin care from age 25 onwards, when our skin hits its peak and begins its slow decline.

Studies show that Lancome's product improves skin metabolism reactivation by 118 percent, as tested by 93 women within four weeks. This is their self-evaluation result: 98 percent found their skin to be smoother, 91 percent more radiant, 96 percent firmer, 94 percent visibly regenerated and 89 percent overall improved complexion.

A personal observation: The Secret de Vie smells divine and feels silky without being oily. When you wake up in the morning, skin looks poreless, even, soft, firm and glowing.

This product was road-tested by two power women: Sexy fashion designer Lulu Tan Gan and regal businesswoman Baby Cruz. Both women did not use a separate serum and eye cream, but treated the Secret de Vie as an all-purpose treatment after cleanser and toner.

Lulu says, "After using Secret de Vie, my skin had a glow and felt softer. I would OD the cream on my eye area and neck! Today, I no longer feel the lines around my eyes, and my pores closed a bit on my third week of use. My skin tone is also more even."

Baby, meanwhile, says, "My pigmentation spots have lightened after using the product. My skin is more translucent and clear. People have asked if I changed anything in my appearance or with my makeup!"

BABY CRUZ with Lancome Secret De Vie

Their talent fee? Free Lancome Secret De Vie and nothing more! These two women are spokespersons simply because they are impressed by the results and believe in the product.

Sisley Daily Line Reducer (P18,000, 30 ml pump bottle). The most expensive product I'm featuring in this column, because Sisley uses only the purest botanicals and does not impose a budget on their research department. A product will not be released until it is considered as close to perfect as possible, even if it takes a decade to launch.

Sisley's products boast of long-term natural results rather than short-term artificial quick fixes. They work by inducing a filling-in action from within and targets the very core of wrinkles.

The Daily Line Reducer slows down the effects of aging while aiding natural skin repair. The test subjects in the four-week span included 150 women aged 36 to 50 who were already using other antiaging treatments from different brands.

Their general consensus: After just four weeks, dehydration lines and shallow wrinkles have visibly diminished, especially on problem areas like the nasolobial folds framing the mouth, the lines between eyebrows and deep crow's feet.

The face appears lifted, skin feels visibly denser and plumped, and contours are more defined, making the face look more youthful.

A personal observation: The gel like-texture is nongreasy, but instantly hydrates dry areas and seems to gently exfoliate thick, rough, oilier areas of skin. With proper use, the product lasts for about two to three months. Yes, a little goes a long way.

PEARLY waterproof eyeliner #7L Turquoise, P780

Color play

LOOSE powder #N18, P1,200

Make Up Forever opens its first shop in Manila with a blunt warning against skin whitening: Filipinos have good skin tone and they should improve on it, not destroy it by aping Caucasians

EYE shadow #004, P950

By Irene C. Perez

IT STARTED AS A MAKEup line purely for professionals who do the glossiest fashion spreads, the most intricate, body painting and the goriest stage effects.

Over a decade later, Make Up Forever has become a favorite among makeup junkies, pros and newbies alike. And what better way to learn putting makeup on than through the experts?

Artists Dany Sanz and Jacques Waneph established the Make Up Forever brand in 1984 to cater to fellow artists who needed face paint. But it drew more than makeup masters after it opened its first shop in Paris; the brand has become a favorite worldwide among ladies who enjoy the brand's fresh quality and formula.

From its quaint Paris shop, Make Up Forever is now present in 45 countries and has over 1,400 items, including 125 shadows, 100 lipsticks, and body-painting and special-effects products.

Kikay girls in the country can now have their fix of Make Up Forever items as it opens its first two local shops on the 3/F, Indulgences, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong; and on 3/F, The Block, SM City, North Edsa, QC.

But would the French brand's shades suit Filipina skin?

Very much, said JC Blachere, Make Up Forever export director for Europe, Middle East and Asia-Pacific. "There is no limit when it comes to makeup but one's personality."

Pinays dependent on oil-control film will benefit from the Mat Velvet Oil-Free Foundation, which has long-lasting formula and a creamy texture for comfy wear. It has SPF 20 sunprotection, too.

LIP palette #N9 Rasberry Harmony, P1,980

POWDER foundation #103, P1,750

EYE shadow and blush #099 orange red, P950

Makeup-shy

A lot of Filipinas are still makeup-shy, what with many still considering a dusting of baby powder and a film of petroleum jelly on the lips "makeup." Blachere said this is more of a cultural thing. What surprises him, though, is the onslaught of skin-whitening products not only in the country but in Asia.

"Asian people are blessed with deep skintone," he said. "I wish the market will recognize that these products may be damaging."

That's the No. 1 makeup mistake that Asians have, he says: wanting to look Western.

"It's now difficult to find Asians with natural hair color, or eye color for that matter!" said Blachere, who has been with Make Up Forever for 11 years.

Blachere gave makeup tips: "Makeup is a matter of being adventurous. It is a mask—build rather than achieve. Add to what you already have. Don't change your skintone."

For us Pinays who have strong lips, coppery shades are the best, Blachere said. A trend to watch out for this season is the old Spring/Summer look of the '40s and '50s. Matte finish for skin and lips will also dominate instead of shimmer and gloss, he said.

Bestsellers

Make Up Forever has a rich palette of colors for every skintone, and unique formulas and textures that assure buyers of the purest makeup products.

A bestseller is the Face and Body Liquid Makeup that comes in a light, fresh and smooth gel. It evens out the complexion and finishes as a light sheen powder for a natural effect.

Open up those peepers with the Star Powder. Its pure, ultra-fine mother-of-pearl particles give your eyes intense sparkle and shine. Its loose-powder formula makes for easy application with the most illumination.

Lush up those lashes with the Lengthening Mascara that deposits pigments along the entire lash line for maximum lengthening and curling.

Lip-color lovers, meanwhile, may choose from Make Up Forever Lipsticks that comes in Mat (for an even, intense finish), Lacquered (highlights the sensuality of the lips), Transparent (for a delicately colored natural shine) and Pearly (for an iridescent sparkle).

There's also the fun-to-use Lipstick Palette with five shades that you can mix and match. And lip-gloss loyalists will enjoy the Super Lip Gloss that adds volume to the lips and comes in a transparent mini-tube that will fit any *kikay* kit.

Perfect for the cheeks are the matte and iridescent Powder Blushes made of highly pigmented pressed powder. They contain nylon powder which gives one freedom in blending colors.

There is no such thing as having too much makeup, or being too pretty for that matter. Get a makeover and have a fresh new look.

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Hatakin ang barkada. Game kahit saan mapunta.

Bagong trip, ba't di subukan? Sama ka, 'wag magpaiwan!

Kilalanin ang kapitbahay. Batiin ang kaaway.

'Pag nadapa, bangon lang. 'Pag may tumawa, bow na lang.

Kung manalo, eh di masaya. Kung matalo, may next time pa.

Kung mahal mo, 'pakita mo. Walang mawawala sa 'yo.

Pangarap, 'wag bitawan. Malay mo. Subok lang!

Sama-sama. Salu-salo. Buhay Coke, Buksan Mo!

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Cut & keep

Power Curl

By Barbi Chan
Contributor

HOW CAN ONE ACHIEVE those flirty, long lashes?

Using a mascara is sometimes not enough. One important trick is to learn how to curl your lashes.

Curling your lashes is like blowing your hair with a hairdryer and brushing to give it the waves you want. Mascara then works as a hair gel to set the curls.

If you have naturally curly lashes, then you can apply mascara without the help of the curl lash. But never apply mascara on straight lashes as this can look unsightly and weird.

There are two types of curlers. The most common is the metal curler, and the other is the electric type. I love using metal curlers because I can approximate the curl I want. Electric ones are also okay, but you have to be very cautious because they can burn your lids if the temperature is too hot.

If you want the same effect as that of the electric one with the metal curler, try using a hair dryer on the metal part of the curler. The heated metal will give your lashes a temporary perm.

Before
After

Basic steps

1. Facing a mirror, tilt your head back at an angle. Place the flat part of the curler on the eyelid, close to the base of the lash.

2. Gently push your eyelid up a little so that you can grip all the lashes. Be careful not to go all the way to the base as you might pull the lashes accidentally. Squeeze the curler gently, hold for 15 seconds and release. Remember not to squeeze too hard. You want your lashes curled, not bent.

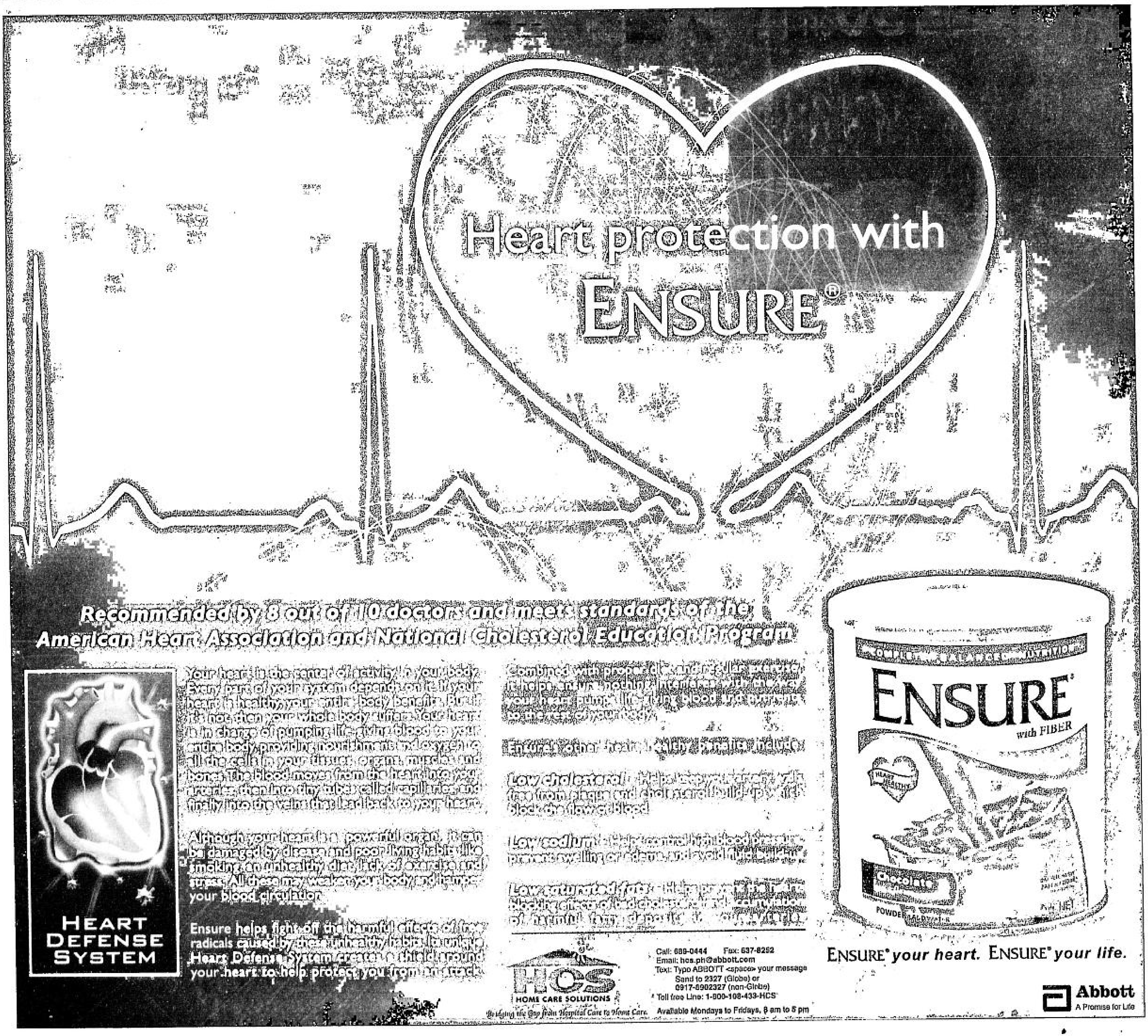
3. Repeat again if you missed some lashes.

If this process proves to be tedious for you, there is another option. Lash extensions! Here, the aesthetician will attach fake lash on your real lash individually until the desired look is achieved. Be prepared to cry a little, though, because the glue that's used for the lashes is kind of strong and can sting a little.

A good place to have lash extensions is at Mikaela Salon at The Fort. If you are on the conservative side, just choose short lashes. It looks natural and you will wake up looking pretty even without makeup!

But as with any beauty regimen, maintenance is a must. Avoid rubbing your eyes as this can deform the shape of your lashes. If you take care of it properly, the extension will last for a month. That means a month of waking up pretty, with less time spent in the bathroom for makeup.

E-mail the author at bc_maybelline_ny@yahoo.com



Recommended by 8 out of 10 doctors and meets standards of the American Heart Association and National Cholesterol Education Program

Your heart is the center of activity in your body. Every part of your system depends on it. If your heart is healthy, your entire body benefits. But if it's not, then your whole body suffers. Your heart is in charge of pumping life-giving blood to your entire body, providing nourishment and oxygen to all the cells in your tissues, organs, muscles and bones. The blood moves from the heart into your arteries, then into tiny tubes called capillaries and finally into the veins that lead back to your heart.

Although your heart is a powerful organ, it can be damaged by disease and poor living habits like smoking, an unhealthy diet, lack of exercise and stress. All these may weaken your body and hamper your blood circulation.

Ensure helps fight off the harmful effects of free radicals caused by these unhealthy habits. Its unique Heart Defense System creates a shield around your heart to help protect you from an attack.

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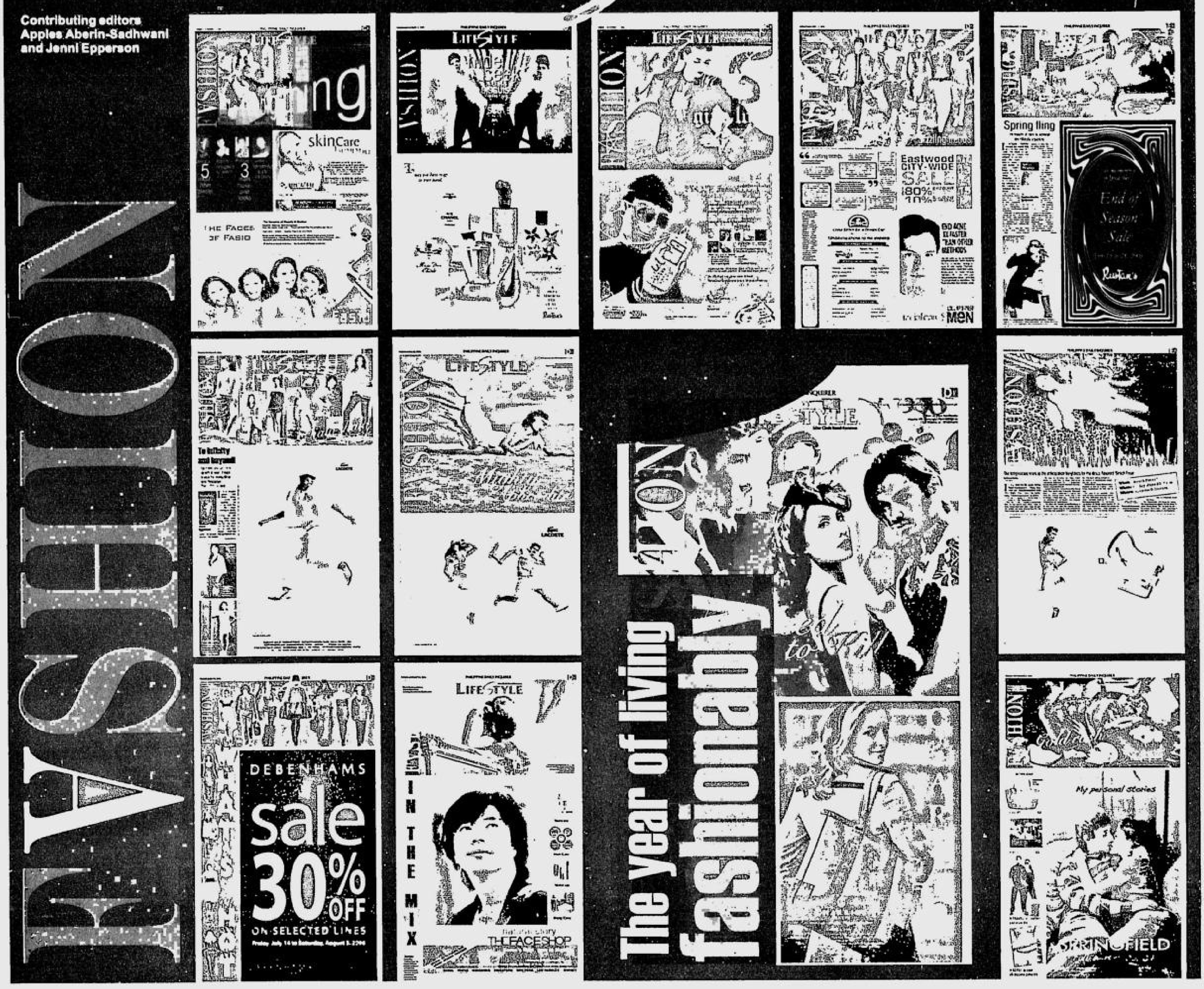
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Lifestyle Fashion

Excess-orize!

Lifestyle Fashion

The look book

A passion
for fashion,
a shared vision
and healthy
respect for each
other keep us all
focused and
united as we
bring you
INQUIRER
Fashion week
after week

Lifestyle Fashion

Manila Vice

FOR up-to-the-minute fashion updates, we featured the latest, most exciting fashion trends.

Same time last year

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

TIME REALLY DOES FLY when you're having fun. The past year, although challenging in many aspects, was definitely a fulfilling creative collaboration among the diverse but equally artistic and talented members of our team.

A passion for fashion, a shared vision and healthy respect for each other have kept all of us focused and united, and have turned us into a well-oiled team and, more importantly, into good friends.

It all began about the same time last year when our editor and publisher sat us down to conceptualize two new sections that would focus mainly on fashion and beauty. Jenni, Ria and I agreed that our goal would be to present ultra-chic aspirational images to inspire readers to be stylish and in tune with the latest trends and fashion news.

But at the same time, we wanted to marry these aspirations with practical solutions to help women (and men, too) achieve their fashion and beauty goals.

Of course, we'd like to think that we've managed to achieve our objectives. We've certainly tried our best to keep things very real on our end. Thus far, we've featured visually arresting editorials and reports, not to mention extremely honest fashion show reviews. Then we also did occasional makeovers that were popular and much-awaited.

We've also tried to create a bit of balance by constantly offering style alternatives for fashionistas on a budget. Not everyone can afford to buy a YSL Muse or Fendi B Bag, after all. We at INQUIRER Fashion strongly believe that big bucks don't necessarily translate to chic, sleek and fashionable.

Lately, we've also introduced a new section called Fashion Buzz so readers can keep abreast of breaking fashion news both here and abroad.

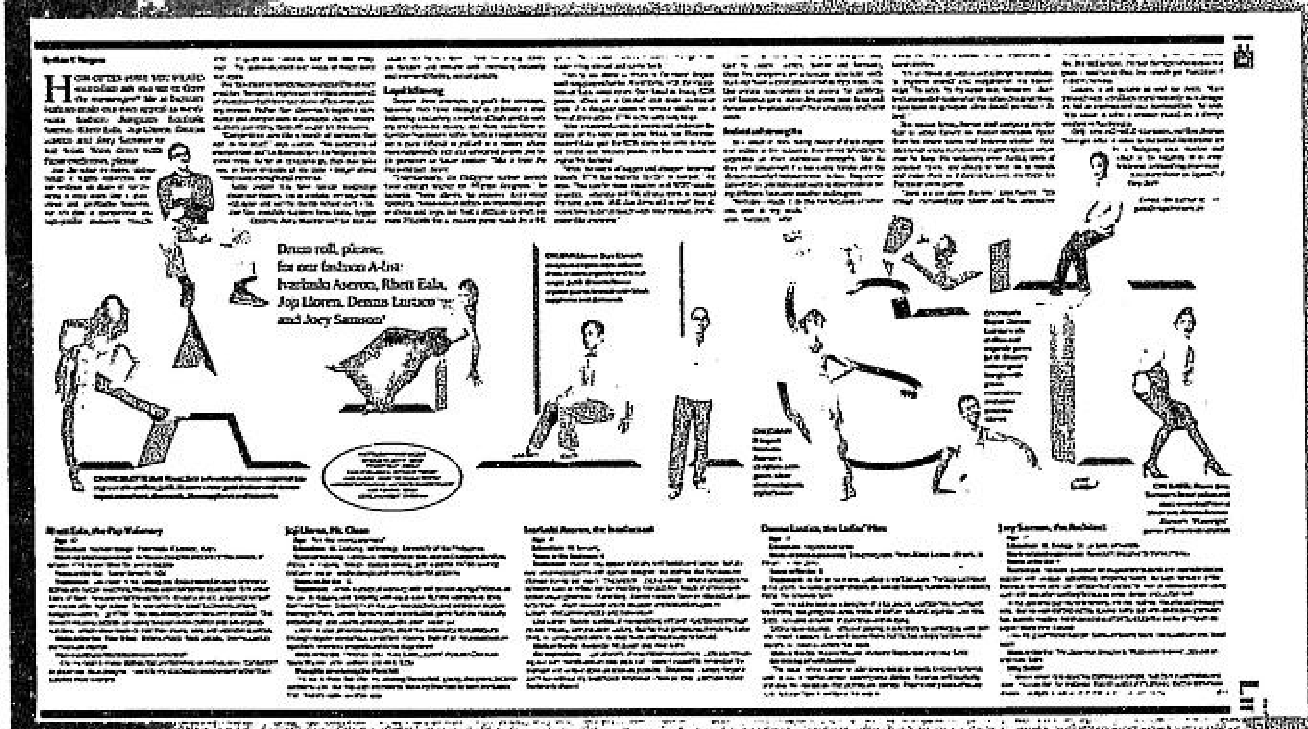
We couldn't have done it all without our hardworking INQUIRER Fashion team. Alex Vergara and Cheche Moral wrote in-depth fashion reports and reviews, plus informative and helpful articles, and will continue to do so in the coming year. Marlone Rubio, our ultra-creative graphic designer, translated our visions into engaging, reader-friendly pages. Stylists Maureen Disini, Karina Cruz, Mela de Luna and Millie Azaga also lent their expertise by styling eye-catching, up-to-the-minute editorials.

Then there were the countless photographers, models, hairstylists and makeup artists, contributing writers, plus designers and retailers (too many to mention but all very dear to us) who helped make our section a visual fashion treat plus an interesting read.

And now that we're into our second year, we hope to improve ourselves further and evolve into the best section we can be by continuously working with the finest artistic minds in the industry, researching on trends and fashion updates, and keeping in touch with our readers base.

In closing, allow us to thank you, our dear readers and fellow fashionistas, for your support in the past year. We'd really love to hear what you think of our section. Your comments and suggestions will definitely help us continuously meet your needs as well as wants.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquire



Drum roll, please, for our fashion A-list: Ivarluski Aseron, Rhett Eala, Jojo Lloren, Dennis Lustico and Joey Samson!

WE also named some of our fave designers who remain leaders in the fashion field.

WE collaborated with artist Norman Crisologo to come up with visually arresting editorials.

Lifestyle Fashion

Careful, careful!

ALTHOUGH [illegible]

Lifestyle Fashion

The ultimate

Those inexpensive yet absolutely amazing totes are the true headturners

Lifestyle Fashion

Slim pickings at 25

WE delivered extremely honest reviews of the latest designer fashion shows.

WE also shared our glamorous, fabulous trips to various fashion events around the world.

Lifestyle Fashion

EVERY now and then, we did [illegible] our readers.

Lifestyle Fashion

The new school of rock

TO PROMOTE art, we fused fashion and art in various features.

BECAUSE not everyone can afford a YSL Muse or Fendi B Bag, we provided cheap but chic alternatives.

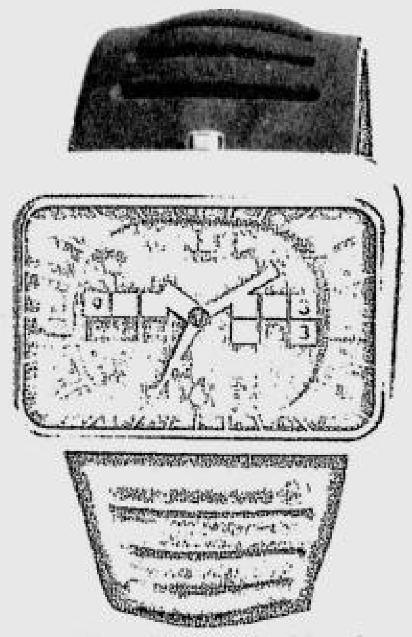
WE love real women with super style so Model Citizens was especially dedicated to them.

Lifestyle Fashion

Seasons' best dressed

Fashionology

AND BECAUSE we all need to brush up on our fashion basics, we wrote about the ABC's of



AXCENT Television watch with red leather straps

TIMEX men's fashion watch

TIMEX color indiglo watch

AXIS stainless steel men's watch with date feature

Fashion watch!

RELIC two-toned lady's watch

Comments? Suggestions? Violent reactions? Words of praise, perhaps?

Come on, fashionistas, let it all out.

We'd love to know what's on your mind about INQUIRER Fashion.

Do e-mail us your thoughts on what would be a more satisfying and stylish read for your every Friday in the INQUIRER.

Your nuggets of wisdom won't be for naught, as the INQUIRER Fashion team will choose nine of the best comments and suggestions. As an added treat, each of the nine inspired individuals will get to wear a watch featured in this space. So start sending us your feedback!

E-mail afashion@inquirer.com.ph.

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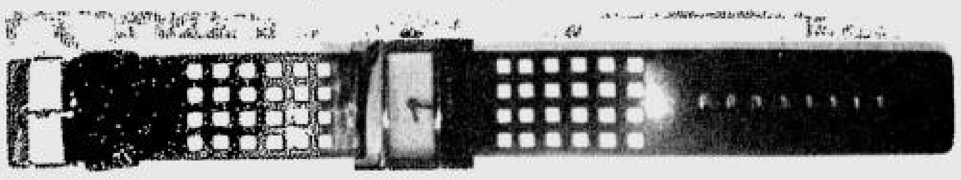
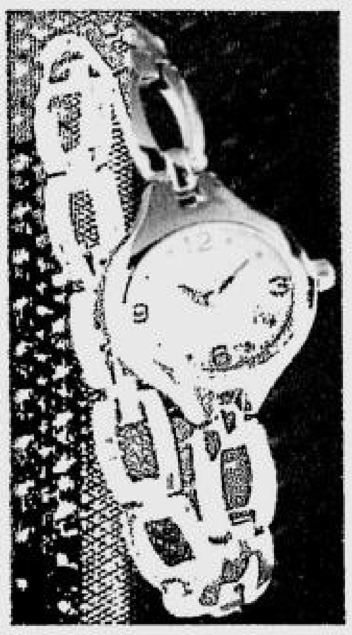
POLICE ladies watch with brown leather straps



GIORDANO funky fashion watch



TIMEX color indiglo watch

ADIDAS Adistar sports watch

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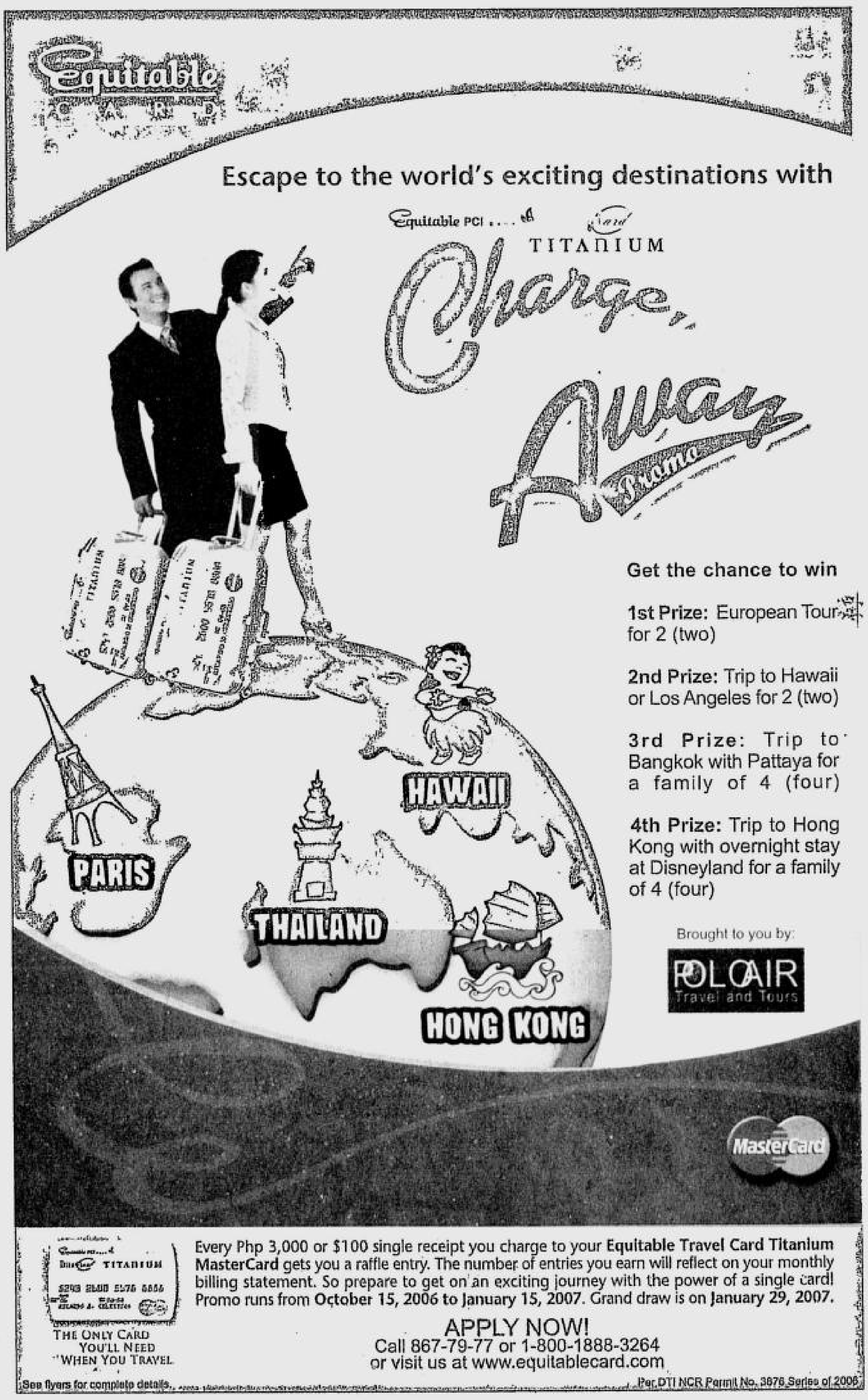

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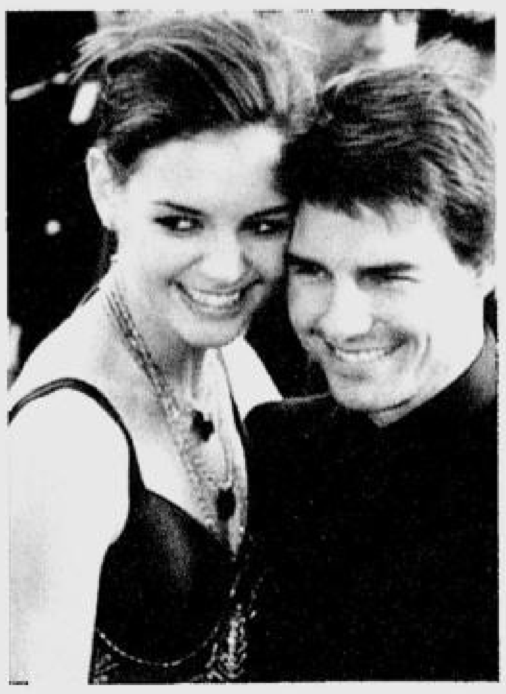
Per DTI NCR Permit No. 3876 Series of 2006

FASHION BUZZ

Hot, haute, hot news!



Wedding couture

WEDDING PLANS ARE UNDERWAY FOR TOM Cruise and Katie Holmes, as their Nov. 18 nuptials in Italy draws nearer. Word has it that the svelte-again new mother is wearing an Armani for her big day.

During Paris Fashion Week, Holmes said that she had already picked her gown. Meantime, Giorgio Armani is supposedly designing five different outfits for various "Tomkat" wedding-related events.

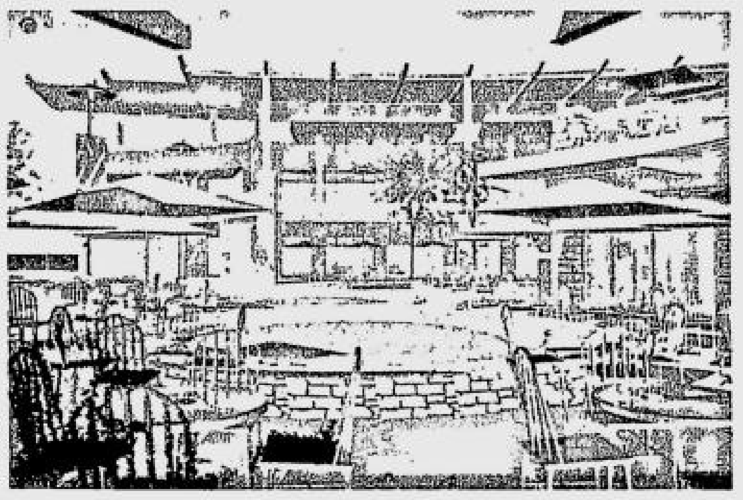
Shopping mall rising

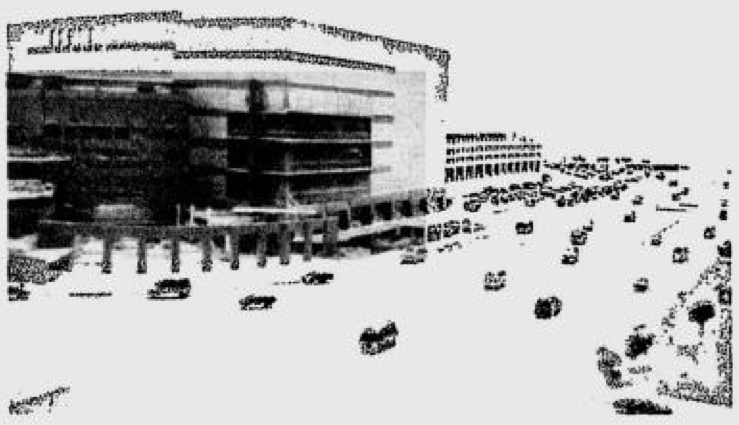
HERE'S EXCITING NEWS FOR FASHIONistas, shopaholics and mall rats in Quezon City and its environs. Ayala Malls will be opening its first regional shopping center called Trinoma (short for triangle south of Manila) in April 2007.

The mall, currently under construction, will offer retail choices that have been carefully selected with the Quezon City market in mind. More than 550 retail, entertainment and food outlets will be strategically divided among four levels. There will also be a spacious foodcourt, seven all-digital cinemas and the utmost convenience of a 3,500-slot parking area.

For a truly convenient and pleasurable shopping experience, Trinoma will have several zones dedicated to very specific markets and needs. What's more, it will feature an outdoor park, dining and entertainment area on the top floor, so shoppers can easily rest their heels, relax and bond with family and friends.

The Ayala Malls' Trinoma, to be located on the corner of Edsa and North Avenue, is definitely something to look forward to.





FASHION SHOUTOUT

Catch the Ford Models' Supermodel of the World 2006 National Finals and find out who the next Filipina Supermodel will be.

Tonight at 7 at the Rockwell Tent.

From the runway to the home

SINCE LAUNCHING HER FIRST BRIDAL collection a decade ago, Monique Lhuillier has been known for her luxurious and feminine wedding and red carpet gowns for fashion-savvy women. Her designs have had a resounding effect on trends worldwide and have captured the attention of celebrities like Angelina Jolie, Sara Jessica Parker, Reese Witherspoon, Alicia Silverstone and Britney Spears, to name a few.

The world-class Filipino designer has now taken a giant stride from the runway and red carpet into the home, as she designs a line of tableware, stemware and giftware aptly called "Monique Lhullier for Royal Doulton."

The exclusive collection, currently scheduled to debut in spring 2007, promises to be durable enough for everyday use and yet highly sophisticated for special entertaining.

"I incorporated key elements of my bridal designs. The pieces will be sophisticated, soft, well-appointed and made of the highest quality materials, including fine bone china, ceramic and crystal. My hope is that the resulting collection will inspire modern women to use their fashionable place-settings everyday," said Lhuillier.

Incidentally, fashion fans and starry-eyed brides can now get their hands on Lhuillier's pieces without flying to the US. The designer's current collection of ready-to-wear and bridal gowns will be showcased at a dinner gala fashion fundraiser on Nov. 12 at the Makati Shangri-La. The pieces will then be sold during a special one-day sale for ladies on Nov. 13.

The worthy project will benefit Asia Society's young Filipino leadership and cultural education, and Bantay Bata 163's education and care programs for abused children.

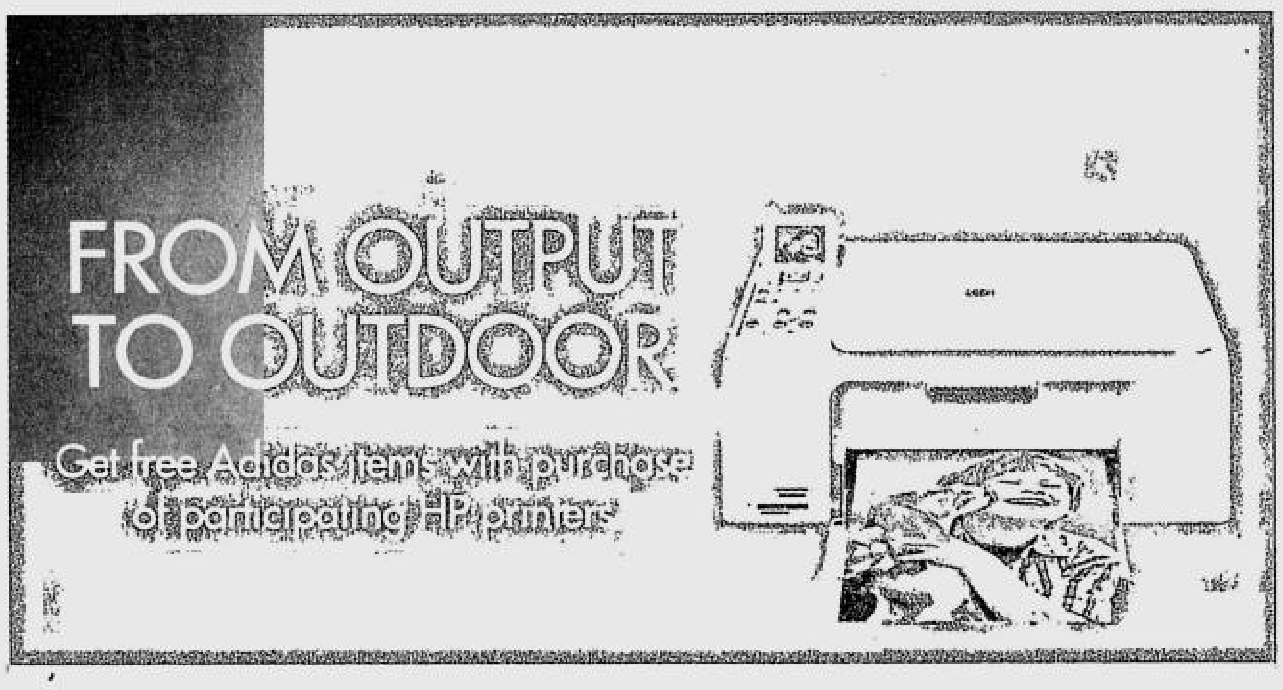
PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILIPPINE TATLER

Own Your Night
METRO 7
WAL-MART

Beauty queen on the boob-tube

GUESS WHO WILL BE STARRING IN HER own soap opera (in the US, mind you) and is currently the spokesperson for Metro 7, Wal-mart's latest, trend-driven line? None other than former Miss Universe Dayanara Torres, who was based here in Manila for several years before she moved abroad to marry, and eventually divorce, Latin crooner Marc Anthony.

Torres will be top-billing a soap entitled "Watch Over Me," a love triangle involving character, her shady businessman boyfriend and her hunk-of-a-bodyguard. In spite of the boob-tube millionaire beau, Torres' TV persona will not be donning designer duds as expected. Instead, she will wear outfits from the Metro 7 collection, which ranges from an extremely affordable US$10 to US$29.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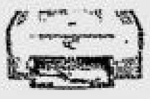

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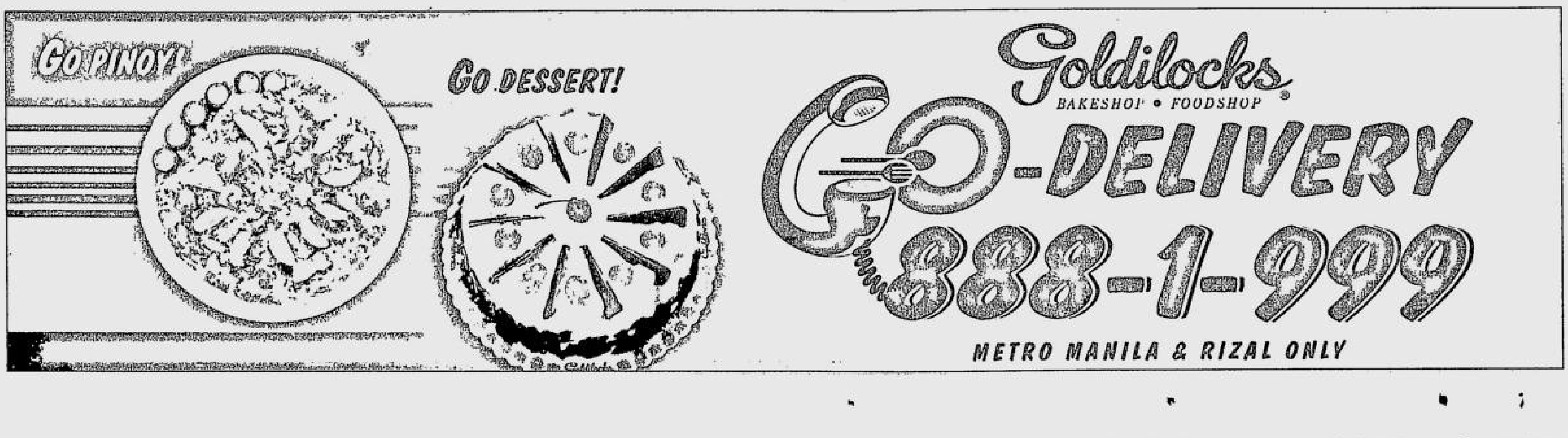
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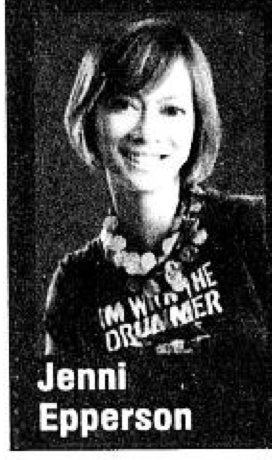
FASHION

Fall on the rise

For INQUIRER Fashion's anniversary, we take a look back at the biggest fashion trends of the past year

Total recall

Mabuhay!



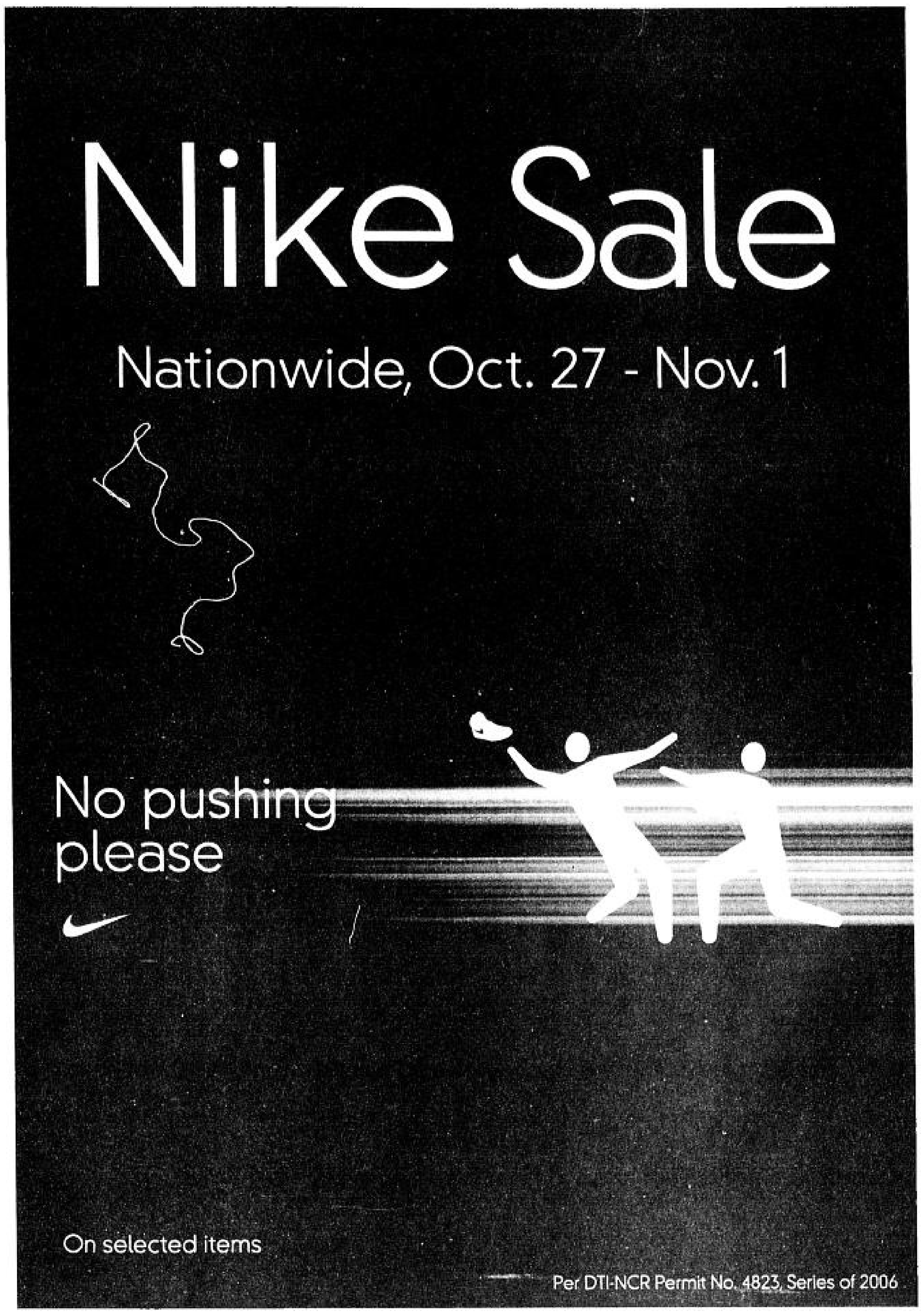
Jenni Epperson

THE LATE GREAT ANDY Warhol, who coined the eternal phrase "15 minutes of fame," once said, "Time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself."

When I look back at these past 365 days, I can't help but feel that they all zipped by so fast, and I wasn't even looking! That was until I reexamined the biggest trends of the year which we, the faithful disciples of fashion, highlighted on the pages of INQUIRER Fashion.

TOTAL/F2

Awesome accessories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On selected items
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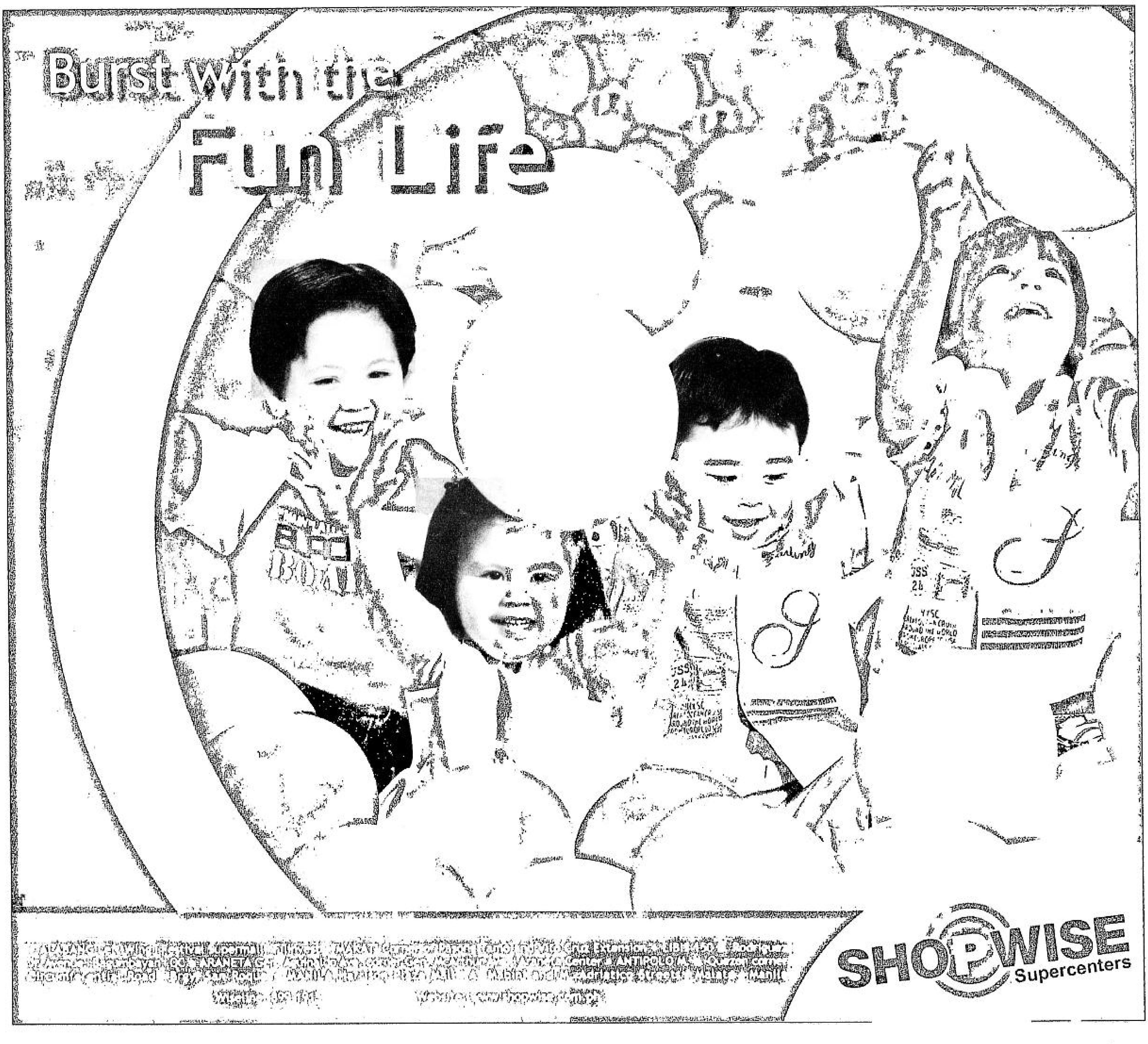

Burst with the Fun Life
SHOPWISE Supercenters

Slim pickings

The skinny on skinny jeans

If it's true that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it, then we must have been real dunces for the dreaded "baston" to make a comeback!

Just when everyone thought these super-tight jeans had been long buried in the '80s fashion cemetery, the denim style has resurrected, albeit with a much more appealing new name, Skinny.

It also got a much-needed PR boost from believers like Kate, Lindsay, the Olsen twins and Nicole, all of whom have been described by the tabloids as "skinny," even anorexic, at one point in their careers.

Skinny jeans are now in every fashionista's must-have list, and this will continue well into the next season.

The edge of the wedge

Every summer, the wedge becomes a favorite. It's the friendlier high heel, and it's notorious for being what you suck on after every shot of tequila!

Women like the wedge because it gives that extra height without the extra pain that stilettos bring. And, not to mention, you can still walk on the seashore without sinking on the sand like a sheepish Oriental tourist.

Fashion FLASH

Garden 'schus'

Made of cork, wood, espadrille, even metallic ones, the wedge has become the summer season's mainstay platform.

Total recall

From page F1

These trends not only charted the passing of time, but also gave us a glimpse of the ever-changing consciousness of style mavens. Many of these trends were certainly resurrected from the past. Some of them were thought to be long dead and buried forever, but like Kylie Minogue's career, they came back, and with modern touches in the right places, became more glorious than ever.

Again, like what Warhol said, it's up to us to change them ourselves.

More than simply telling our readers what's "hot" or "in" this season, we showed them how to incorporate these key pieces into their wardrobe. What's more, we showed them how to wear these pieces to suit different body types, and also where to get them without breaking the bank. In that sense, more than being "in," being an individual was our prime message.

For INQUIRER Fashion's anniversary, we take a look back at the biggest fashion trends of the past year, as we also look forward to continue reporting the headlines from the fashion forefront.

As always, have fun, fun, fun when creating new looks!

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

Love, actually

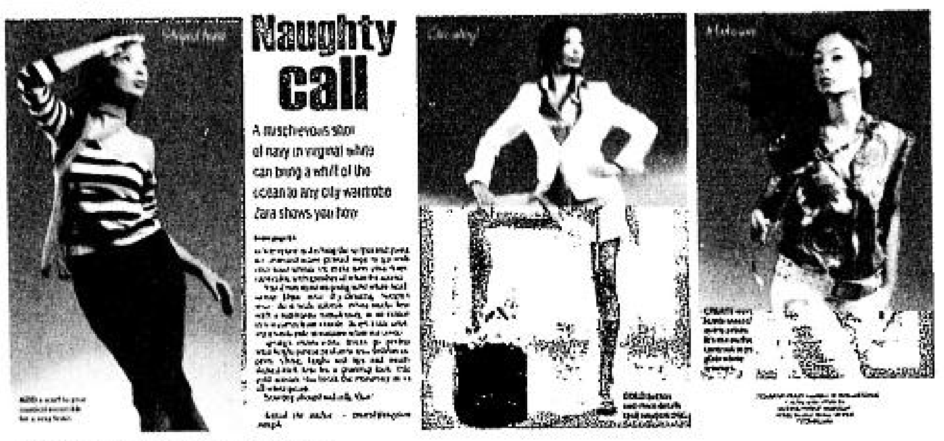
I Love You makes vintage fashion high art

Vintage dressing: Old's cool

Love the irony—old clothes are new again. *Ukay-ukay* has become the new bazaar, not just for the penny pinchers, but also for the serious shopaholics.

How did old school become the new cool? A round of applause goes to the celebs and Hollywood red-carpet mainstays who flashed their vintage finds for the paparazzi. A favorite vintage story tells of Kylie's creative director and stylist who discovered a pair of gold lamé hot pants from a second-hand clothing store at London's Portobello Road (one such haven of vintage finds.) The Aussie pop princess teamed these teeny shorts with a designer top and bespoke heels, and flaunted her boo-tay in a video clip. Five years later, those ruched lamé hot pants reached iconic status, and formed part of Kylie's donation of more than 300 items from her personal collection to the Performing Arts Collection.

Talk about turning something old into solid gold!



Naughty call

A mischievous shot of navy in virginal white can bring a whiff of the ocean to any city wardrobe. Zara shows you how

Nautical's naughty call

This past summer, the nautical look made a lot of waves. Navy blue even became the new black for a while.

What made this look set sail? Well, the fresh, clean styles radiated the "yacht club" vibe, particularly the striped-tees-and-white-shorts tandem. The twist to this familiar fisherman's tale is that the look has been updated with naughtier elements. Why, hello, sailor!

Leggings get a leg up

Leggings not only made a comeback, they were the biggest trend of the year. Perhaps because leggings are so versatile and stylish—you can wear them under a skirt or on their own, you can wear them long or calf-length. Here we also see how fashion trends influence each other to morph or give birth to something new—like opaque stockings and skinny black pants.

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Speak volumes

IT'S A FASHION blowout, ladies! Poufy and puffy silhouettes are this season's most exciting style. No more girdles or other belly bottoms support. If you're afraid to look like a cotton ball, stick to separates such as bubble skirts or tent dresses.

Fall

Speaking in volume

First was the bubble skirt, then the bloomer shorts, then the cocoon clothes.

Fashion spoke volumes last season, and women finally got to eat their just desserts. The fairy godmother of fashion seemed to take out her style wand and... poof! Everything became puffy. Voluminous tops and the popsicle silhouette were flaunted in both runways and streets—stark contrast to the skinny-jeans brigade.

A ... of a tale

Bag, bigger, biggest

What to do when fashion houses realize the true moneymaker is in the bag, literally? Why, they make them big, of course. Very big!

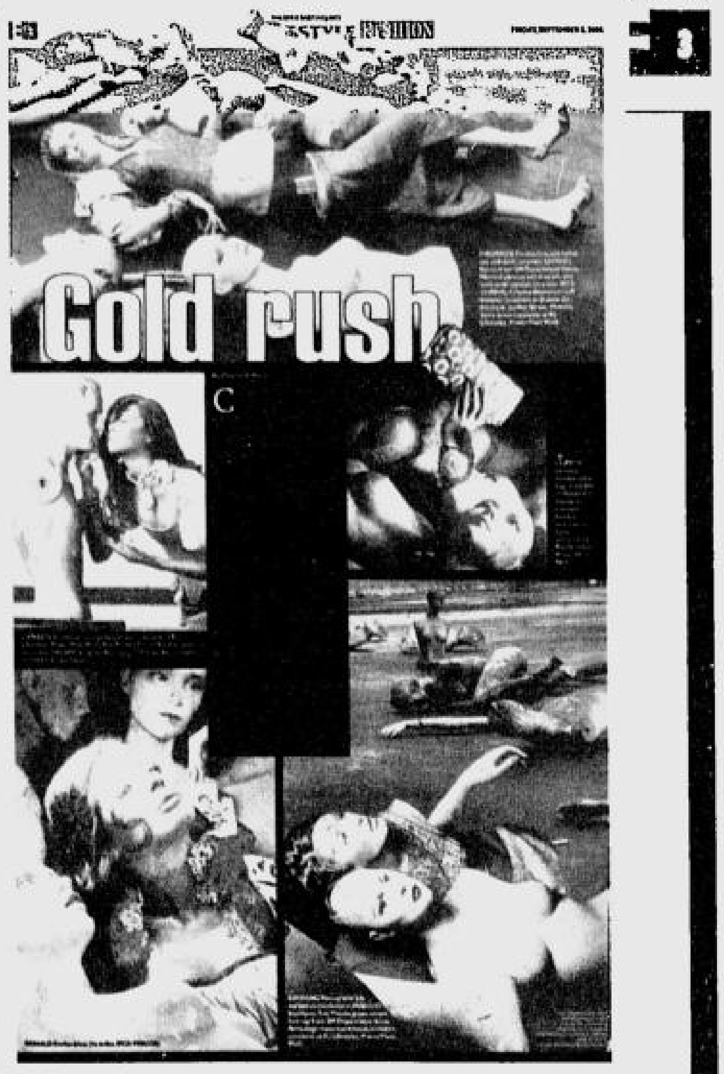
Oversized bags were toted by young Hollywood A-listers, who showed them off like Oscar trophies. More than just being a plus-size fad, big bags are functional. No need to try cramming cell phones in pockets the size of a lipstick tube. In this case, size does matter!

Say it with layers

Layering in the tropics? Who would have thought? Then again, with some fabrics now made as thin as tissue, you can bet fashionistas will pile 'em up!

Tank tops topped with T-shirts and topped again with a vest, strapless dresses worn over racerback tops, leggings peeking out under dresses, denim skirts—piling them on seemed as much fun as taking them off!

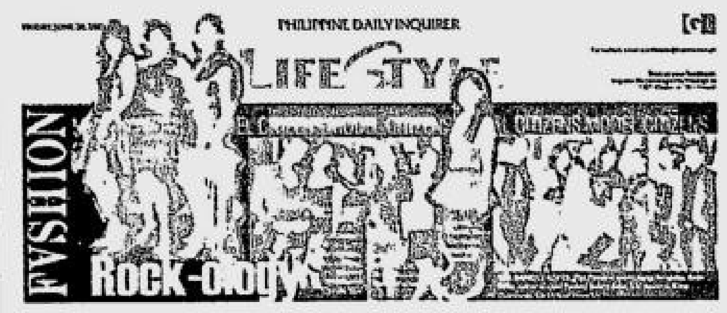
Lay it on thick



Gold rush

Gold rush

Somber colors that dominated fashion last season were given the Midas touch with gold accessories. Gold puts much-needed glamour to minimalist silhouettes. Gold necklaces were particularly big this year.



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

FVSHION

Rock-ology

Rock 'n' roll!

Turn up the amp: Rock 'n' roll lives on in fashion! I can assure you this was not because of "Rock Star: Supernova's" Dave Navarro (though he is a tattooed sweetheart), but more of host Brooke Burke's ultra sexy glam rock threads. Almost overnight, every girl wanted to turn in their lace for leather, and every gay guy wanted to trade in his disco pants for deconstructed denim.

It's high time for women who've got that rock 'n' roll spirit in them to express it with just-rolled-out-of-bed hair, noir nails and dark duds. Super sexy butt-hugging jeans and ittie-bittie rock tees à la Mick Jagger are now back on the scene, thrashing hotel rooms everywhere.

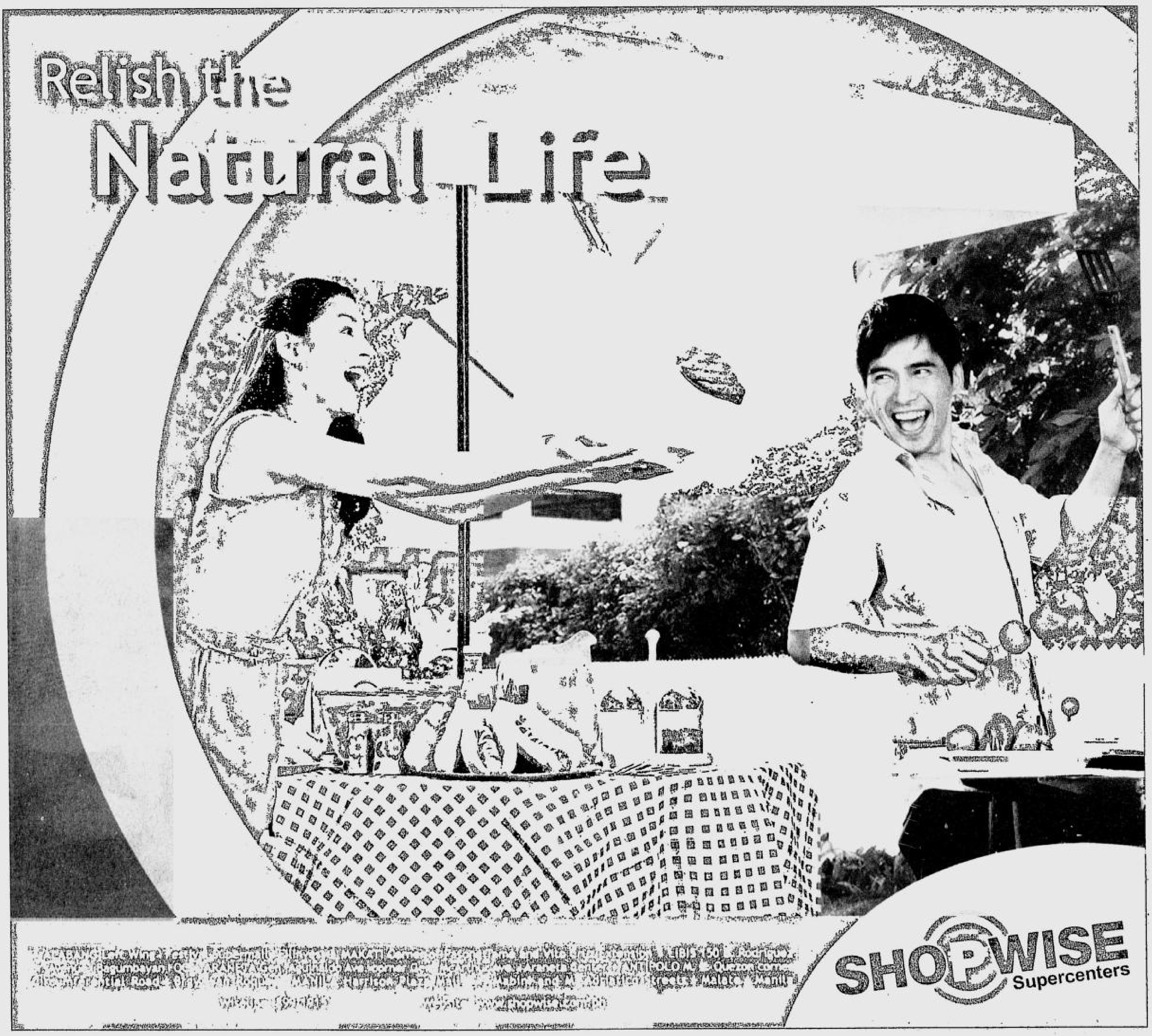
Shine of the times: Patent it

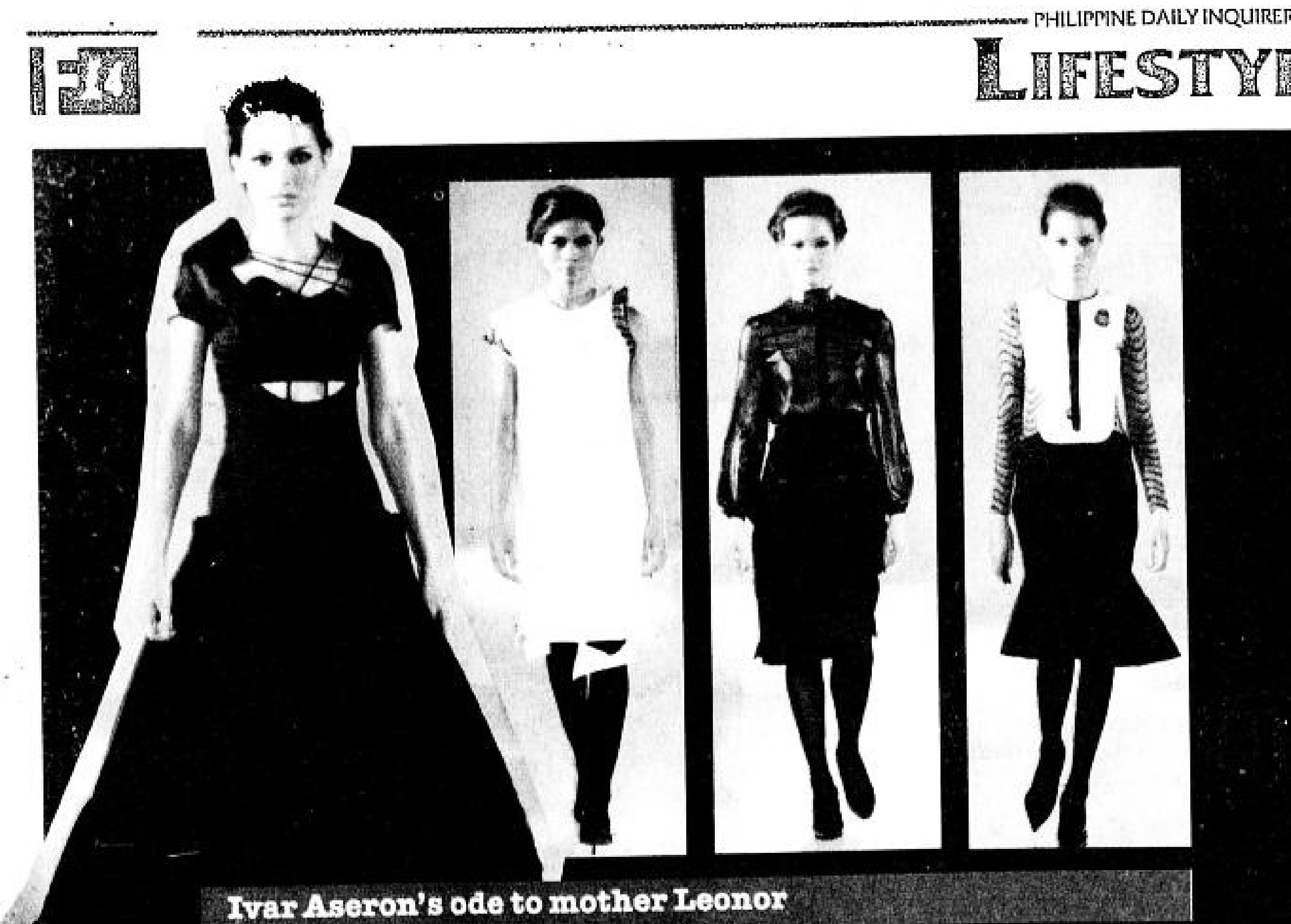
Shine on

Patent leather is stronger this season, so if you have not yet invested in a bag, belt or a pair of shoes made of this shiny leather, now's the time to do so. Booties or an oversized bag are ultra chic. Or go for a shiny belt that's high in style.

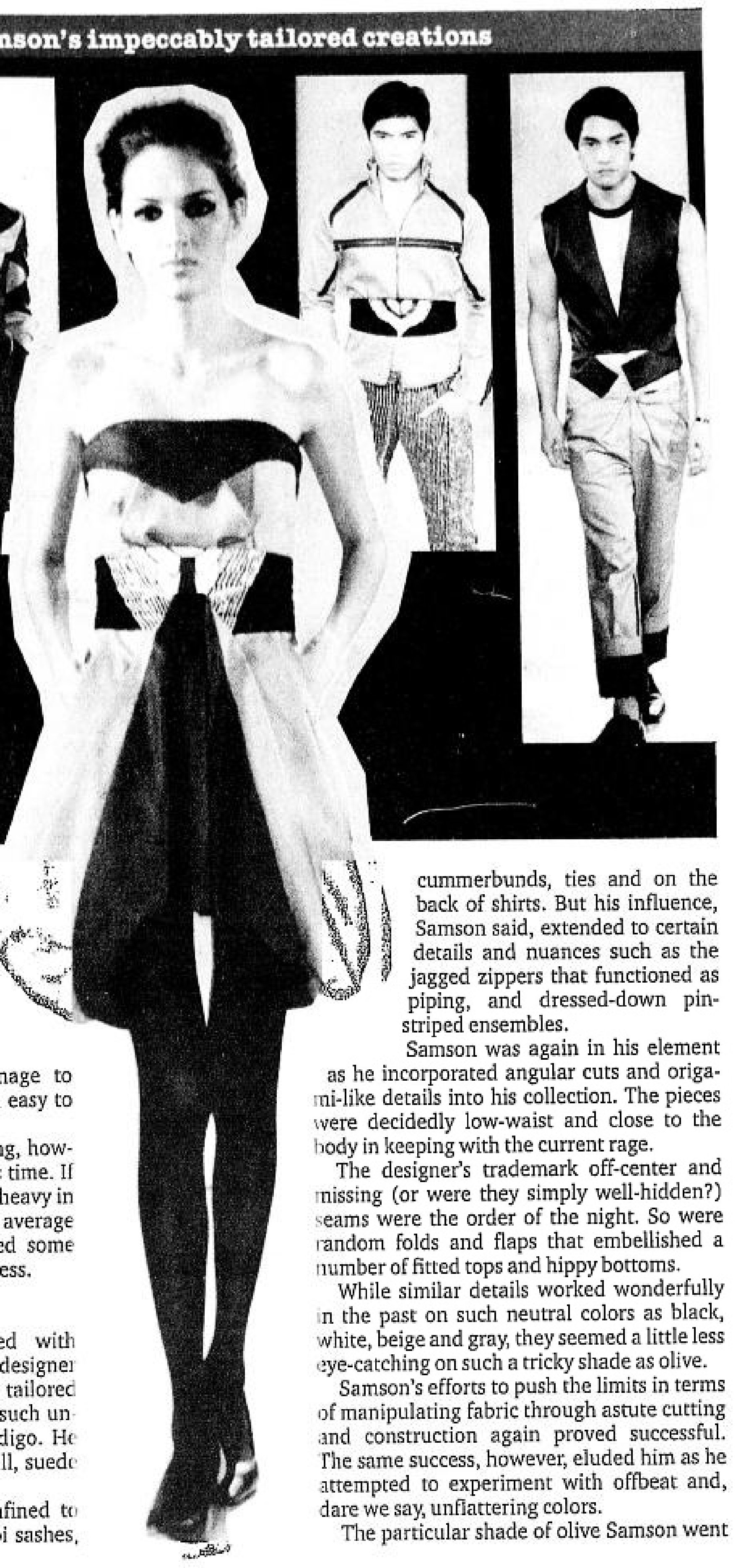
Everything from the '80s just seemed to make sense this season. Which means everything glossy and shiny made the fashion headlines. Patent everything—bags, shoes and belts—hit the trend-o-meter. High gloss leather has been Fendi's savior this season, present in the popular Fendi B bags and belts.

All things shiny made quite a lot of people happy. Many donned lip gloss-like shiny leather in shocking colors like red, indigo—gasp!—even canary yellow!





Ivar Aseron's ode to mother Leonor



Joey Samson's impeccably tailored creations

Twice edgy, twice safe

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

Metrowear rookies Joey Samson and Ivarluski Aseron steered clear of the tried-and-tested, while Randy Ortiz and Anthony Nocom were anything but offbeat

A GOOD FRIEND, A RECENTLY deceased mother and the all-important client were the primary inspirations for the holiday collections presented by fashion designers Randy Ortiz, Anthony Nocom, Joey Samson and Ivarluski Aseron to a packed crowd at the Rockwell Loft in Makati.

Organized by Metro Magazine and sponsored by Samsung, the show was the third in the "Metrowear Series," the fourth and last of which will have Cesar Gaupo as featured designer on Nov. 8.

Thank goodness the hits far outnumbered the misses. Despite such conscious attempts to be a tad different, the four managed to retain their individual identities as designers. This, in a way, proved to be both a bane and a boon.

It was the first time that Samson and Aseron joined Metrowear, and the two didn't disappoint.

Aseron, whose mother passed away in May, paid tribute to the most important woman in his life with a collection called "Leonor."

Since he derived inspiration from his mom's pictures through the decades, Aseron's black and white pieces mirrored his take on different mods and eras. Thus, silhouettes and details ranged from straight to A-line, billowing sleeves to shirred skirts, blousons with exaggerated epaulets to huge, dramatic ball gowns.

For the first time, too, he used black stretch lace, in the form of fitted tops, as underlay (and an ideal foil) to several duchess satin dresses. Sheer metallic chiffon and silk taffeta completed his arsenal of materials.

Again, Aseron used his trademarks, which included plenty of cutouts, jigsaw puzzle-like flaps, loops and dresses sans cuts, to maximum effect.

How do Aseron and (good friend but perhaps imminent rival) Samson manage to make hard-to-construct clothes seem easy to do?

Aseron's attempts at ad hoc draping, however, proved to be less successful this time. If slim models with lithe bodies looked heavy in his taffeta numbers, imagine how the average woman would fare. We also spotted some puckering on one model in a white dress.

Easy on the olive

Meanwhile, Samson collaborated with artist friend Paolo Vinluan and shoe designer Brian Tenorio to fashion impeccably tailored and fitted his and hers separates in such unusual combinations as olive and indigo. He played with double-faced cotton twill, suede and satin fabrics.

Vinluan's contributions were confined to hand-painted embellishments on obi sashes, cummerbunds, ties and on the back of shirts. But his influence, Samson said, extended to certain details and nuances such as the jagged zippers that functioned as piping, and dressed-down pin-striped ensembles.

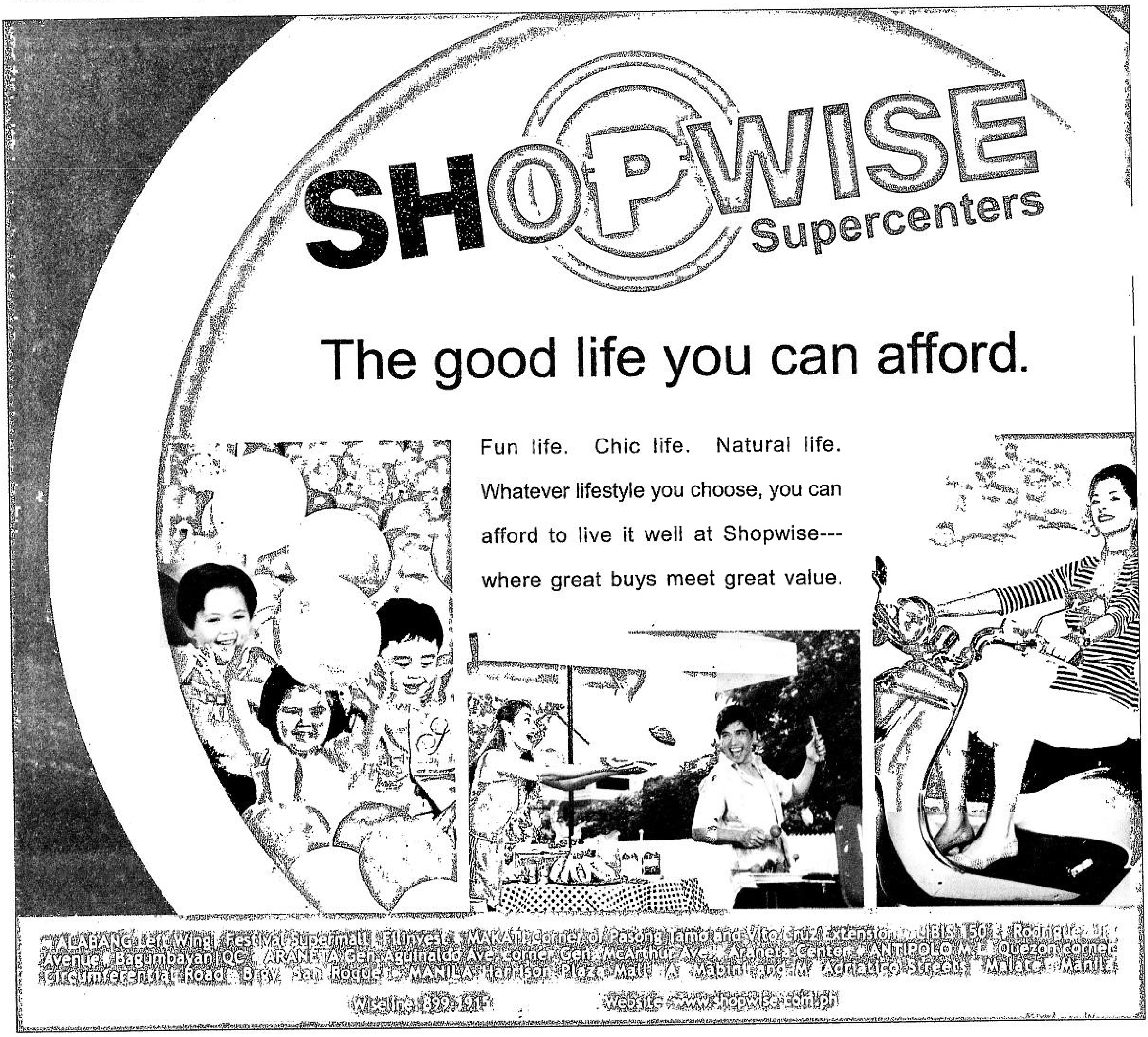
Samson was again in his element as he incorporated angular cuts and origami-like details into his collection. The pieces were decidedly low-waist and close to the body in keeping with the current rage.

The designer's trademark off-center and missing (or were they simply well-hidden?) seams were the order of the night. So were random folds and flaps that embellished a number of fitted tops and hippy bottoms.

While similar details worked wonderfully in the past on such neutral colors as black, white, beige and gray, they seemed a little less eye-catching on such a tricky shade as olive.

Samson's efforts to push the limits in terms of manipulating fabric through astute cutting and construction again proved successful. The same success, however, eluded him as he attempted to experiment with offbeat and, dare we say, unflattering colors.

The particular shade of olive Samson went



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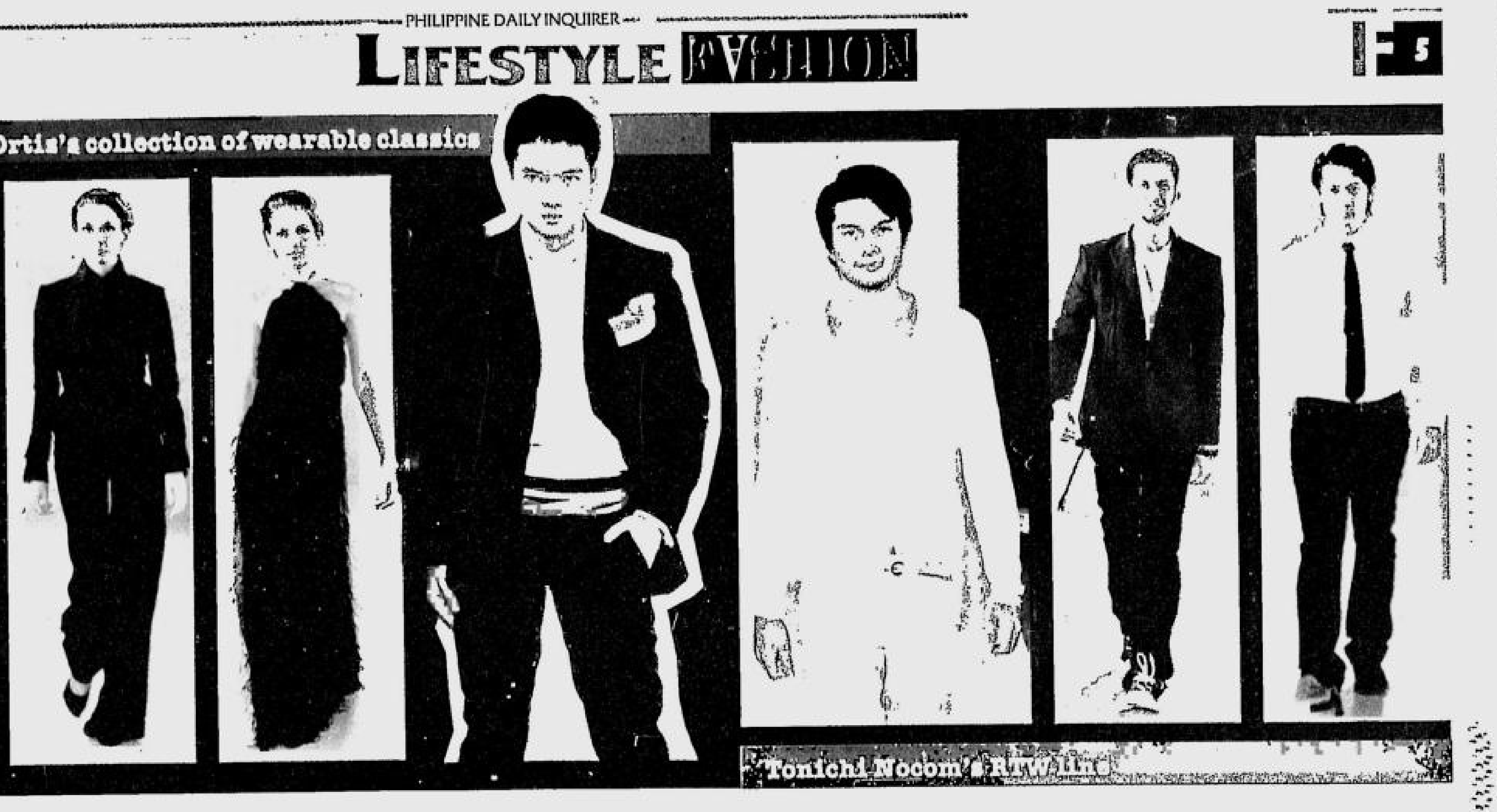

Randy Ortis's collection of wearable classics

Tonichi Nocom's RTW line

for doesn't suit brown-skinned Filipinos well. The designer admitted as much when he advised potential wearers to match his shade of olive with certain pastels and neutral colors. Combining it with indigo, as he did, certainly didn't help.

Textures and silhouettes

If Samson played with colors, Ortiz experimented with textures and silhouettes. The latter stuck primarily to black (with the exception of a few pieces in red) using such materials as tweed, silk organdy, wool crepe, taffeta and a bit of chiffon.

His collection was anything but offbeat, however, as he purposely kept it classic and wearable so as not to scare away loyal clients.

At the same time, though, by incorporating subtle elements such as peplums, wide lapels, billowy pants and pleated boleros, Ortiz hoped to appeal to a wider market, which, of course, includes young fashionistas.

His men's suits were decidedly more fitted and carried his signature topstitching and subtly printed trims. He did away with prints this time to come up with a more pulled-together look for men.

As for ladies' wear, Ortiz also shunned his usual prints and electric pleats in favor of rich and textured fabrics and tighter silhouettes. Indeed, many women in the audience couldn't seem to have enough of them.

The horizontally challenged also had reasons to smile, as the designer offered them flattering options in the form of unstructured blouses, belted coats and jackets with raglan sleeves.

Meanwhile, older women can opt for his semi-beaded gowns, long dresses and wide-legged pants. Indeed, like a toy store all decked for the holidays, there's something for everybody in the house of Ortiz.

His clothes might have been guaranteed crowd-pleasers because of their wearability and classic lines (and we don't begrudge him that), but by choosing to play it safe (unlike Aseron and Samson), Ortiz certainly broke no fashion barriers that night.

RTW sensibilities

The same aversion to risk seemed to perpetually hobble men's wear designer Anthony Nocom as he came up with very wearable and close-to-the body shirts, jackets and suits made of stretch cotton, rayon and a few other fabrics in between.

But his all-white ensemble consisting of a cardigan jacket and skinny jeans looked like long johns—a.k.a. winter underwear—from afar.

As one of SM's in-house talents, Nocom has, and perhaps will always have, the sensibilities of an RTW designer. Again, nothing wrong with that, but why line him up year in and year out with colleagues who are doing couture?

As a result, his fairly respectable, if a bit predictable, formal and casual pieces suffered in comparison to Aseron and company's mind-boggling and at times outrageous creations.

Nocom's clothes work by virtue of their simplicity and affordability, but they belong to a different category altogether.

If people behind the country's pioneer lifestyle glossy have taken pains to stage shows in cumbersome and costly installments, then certainly a little tweaking in terms of programming wouldn't hurt to improve future shows.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

(Photos of last week's feature on Metrowear series 2 were by Jim Guiao Punzalan.)

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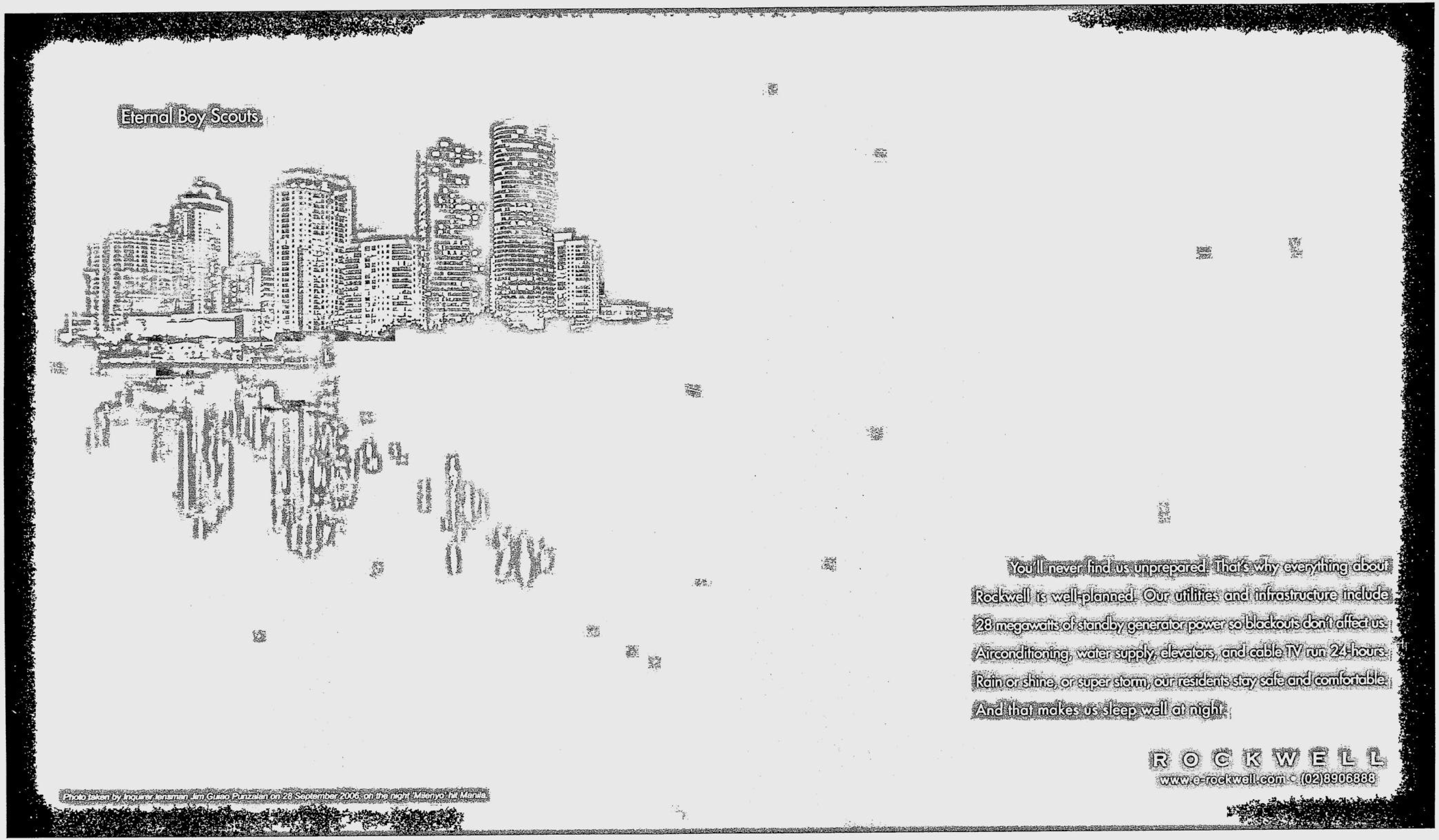

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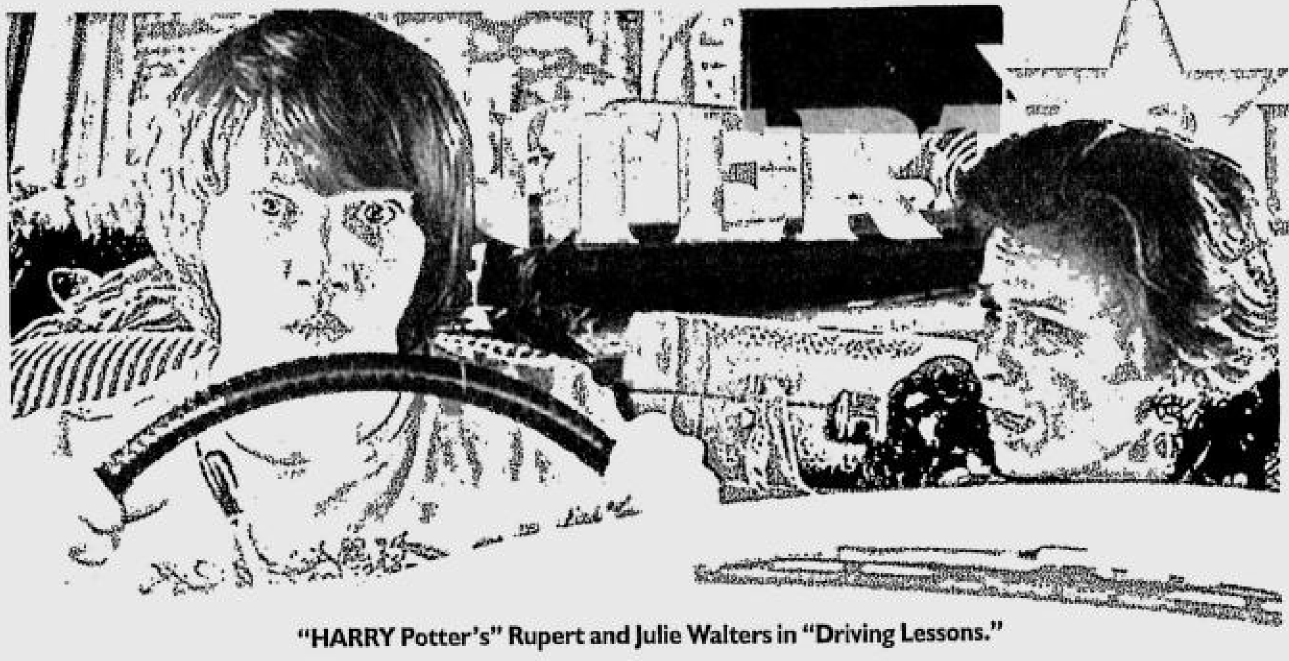

"HARRY Potter's" Rupert and Julie Walters in "Driving Lessons."

A look at Rupert Grint's 'corpse' and Penelope Cruz's fake behind

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

> 'It was lovely to see Rupert express complicated, painful stuff transparently'

LOS ANGELES—OUR COLUMN ON A recent set visit to the fifth "Harry Potter" movie being filmed in England elicited many e-mails from fans of the movie franchise and its principal stars, **Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson** and **Rupert Grint.**

But no one was more *kilig* (tickled) than followers of carrot-topped Rupert, who commands a large fan base. In response to requests from Rupert's legions of admirers who wanted to read more about their favorite "HP" actor, we are printing what **Julie Walters,** his co-star in the new movie "Driving Lessons," said about him in an interview.

Like Daniel and Emma, Rupert spends his breaks from the "HP" series making films or doing projects that are not about magic potions and quidditch games. One result is "Driving Lessons," a coming of age story about a shy 17-year-old (Rupert, of course) who tries to escape from his domineering mother (**Laura Linney**). The world of Rupert's Ben, an aspiring poet, changes dramatically when he works for a retired actress, Evie Walton (Julie). Evie takes Ben on a series of life-changing adventures, from camping to attending the Edinburgh festival.

By coincidence, Julie is also a regular on the "HP" series—but then, which British actor worth his salt is not? Julie, whose notable performances include the chain-smoking dance teacher who sees a young boy-dancer's potential in "Billy Elliot," plays Molly Weasley, the mother of Rupert's character, Ron, in the film adaptation of J.K. Rowling's best-selling books.

In LA recently to promote "Driving Lessons," the candid, colorful Julie was asked if she has been like an Evie to Rupert. "No, I haven't been an Evie to him but it was lovely that it was the two of us (in this film)," replied the actress who won a Golden Globe Best Actress award in 1983 for her breakout role in "Educating Rita."

She continued, "We had short cuts because we've worked together before. Even though my part in 'Harry Potter' is quite small, it has gone on over the years so you get to know them (Rupert, Daniel and Emma) and see them grow up.

A LOOK/ G2

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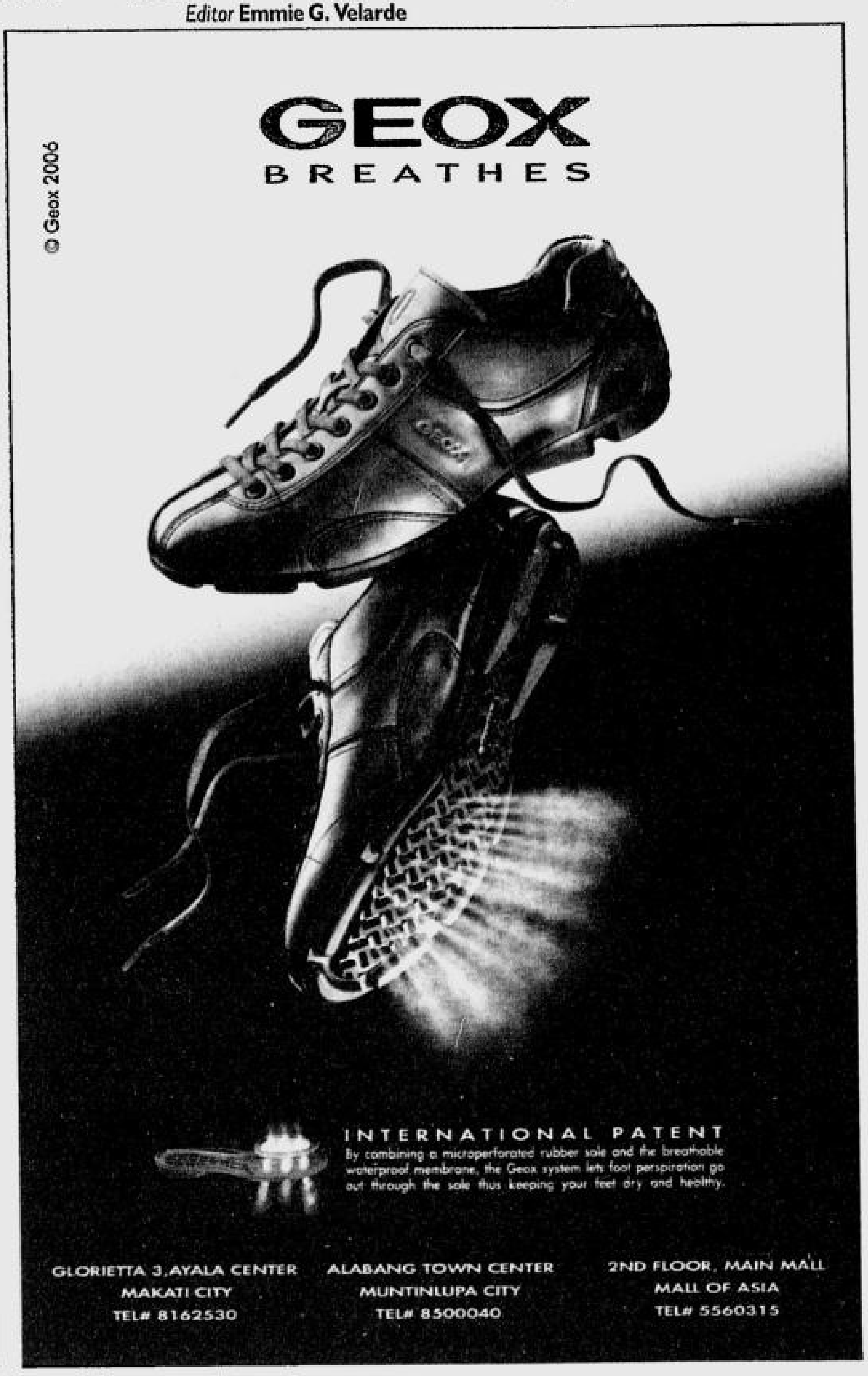
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A look at Rupert Grint's 'corpse' and Penelope Cruz's . . .

From page G1

That kind of intimacy helps. We watched Rupert become a young adult actor. It was lovely to see him be able to express such complicated, painful stuff transparently."

Julie expressed confidence in Rupert's potential as an actor. "He's only 18 so he has loads to find," she stated. "I think he really came up with the goods (on this movie) and did what was required."

As for her co-star's shyness and seeming unease in interviews (although many of his female fans find this a "charming" quality), Julie, herself a mother of an 18-year-old girl, Maisie, defended Rupert. She declared, "Some people find it easier to express themselves. It's gradually coming out. It's not that he does not have the intellectual acumen. It's just that he doesn't express it at the moment. I think he's getting there."

Apparently, what Rupert does not lack is a sense of humor. "Oh yeah," said the actress with a smile. "He's a devil," she added with a mischievous laughter.

She gave an example of Rupert's "naughtiness": "Do you know the word corpse? I don't mean a dead body. It's a theatrical term in England for laughing onstage when you shouldn't be. He needs to go to Corpses Anonymous because he's so naughty. We'd be doing scenes and I'd suddenly see his shoulders going up. If the camera wasn't on him, his shoulders would be going up. I couldn't look at him (because if I did, I would laugh, too). He's good, fun and a sweet, sweet person."

Before Rupert, she starred with **Jamie Bell** in "Billy Elliot" and **Paul Nicholls** in "The Wife of Bath," among other young actors. Will she act again with teenage actors? "I have nothing against acting with young guys," Julie answered with a sly grin, as all the reporters laughed.

Breakthrough role

In another earlier column, we raved about the ensemble acting in "Babel," from **Brad Pitt** and

A LOOK/ G3

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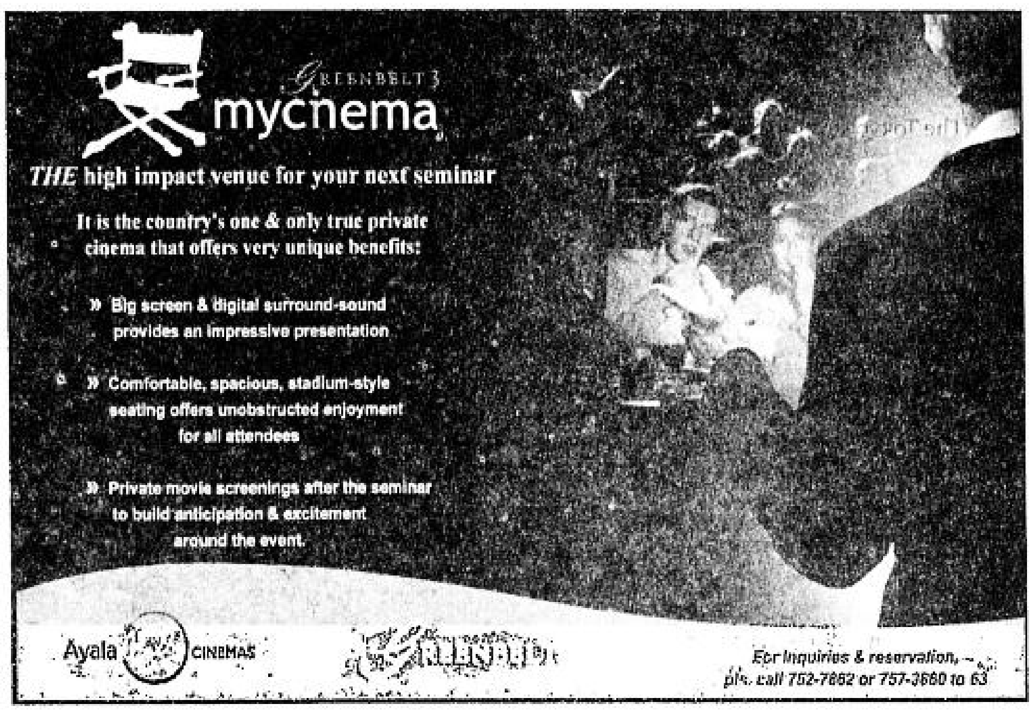

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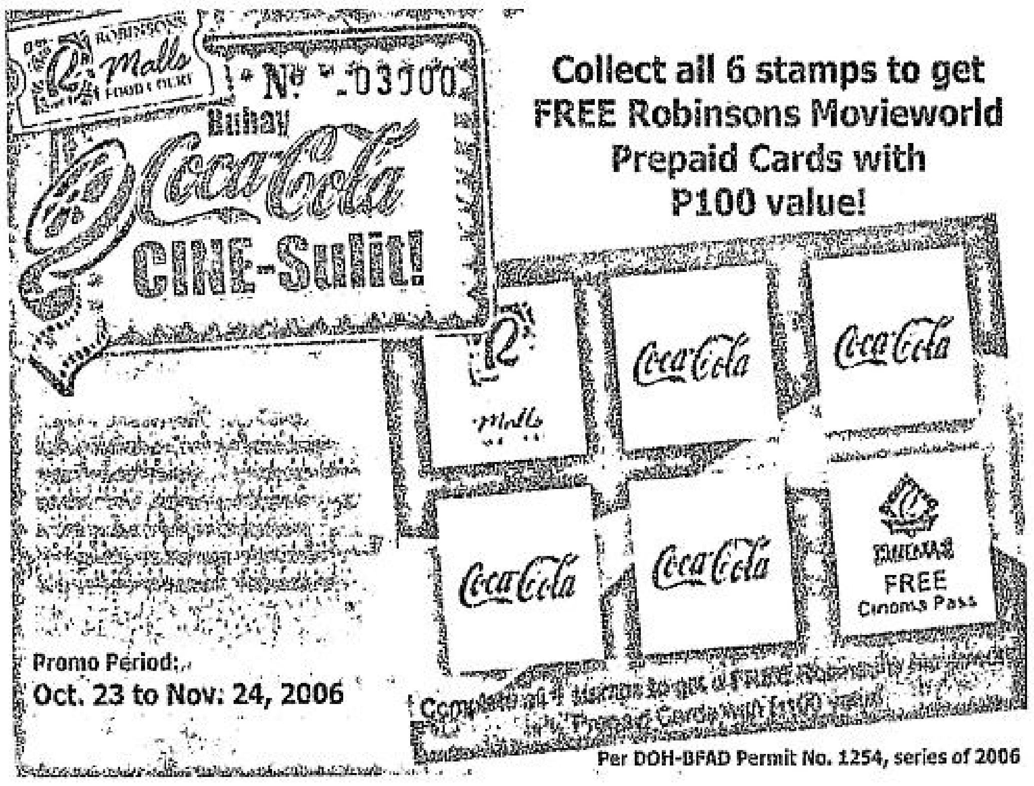

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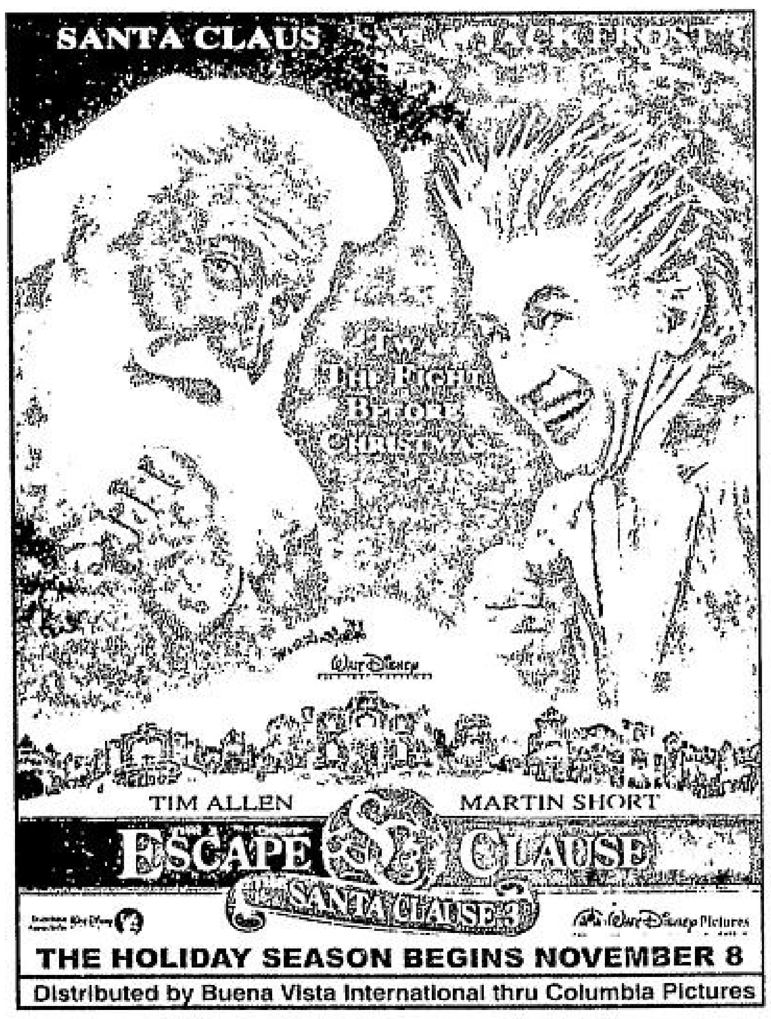

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A look at Rupert Grint's 'corpse' and Penelope Cruz's fake behind

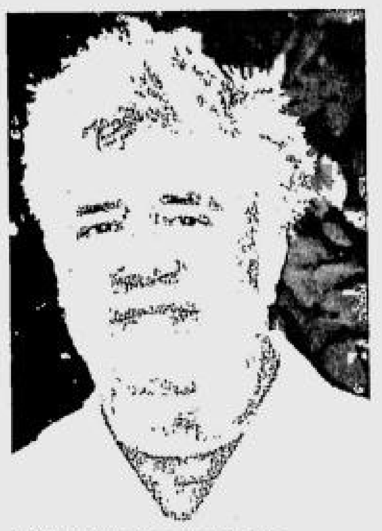
From page G2

Cate Blanchett to Moroccans who were cast just a few days before the shoot and had absolutely no prior acting experience. Everyone in the cast is uniformly excellent but being singled out among the relatively unknown cast members is Japanese actress, **Rinko Kikuchi**, who appears in the film's Tokyo segments (the other stories are set in Morocco and LA/Mexico but somehow, all three episodes are interrelated, thanks to **Alejandro González Iñárritu**'s deft direction).

What Variety's **Todd McCarthy** wrote about Rinko's terrific performance is typical of the critical laurels being heaped on the Japanese actress: "In Tokyo, foxy deaf-mute student Chieko (Rinko Kikuchi) lets her considerable anger allow her volleyball team to lose, has a desultory meeting with her widowed father Yasujiro (**Koji Yakusho**) and, in an impulsive moment at a crowded restaurant, removes the underwear under her short school skirt and begins flashing her privates at boys at a nearby table.

"The Tokyo story, in the end, unwinds in the most unpredictable manner of the three, reaching a moving height of subjectivity when the soundtrack flips between sound and silence during a wild disco evening to underline Chieko's sensory remove and creatively conveying her aching need for an emotional connection … Kikuchi … registers with the most challenging and distinctive performance as a teen who must communicate via sign language and feels a social and emotional outcast for all her physical allure."

In addition to her provocative flashing scene, Rinko also disrobes completely in one scene in this film which shows Tokyo as a beautiful, glittering city but ultimately cold and alienating. We first met Rinko in Toronto at the gala screening of **Sean Penn**'s "All the King's Men" ("Babel" was one of the acclaimed festival entries), but we got to sit down and talk to her later at a press con in LA.



SPANISH director Pedro Almodóvar: Turning Penelope Cruz into "Dustin Hoffman"

Looking younger than her actual age, 25 (that's why she's credible as a high school student), Rinko spoke through an interpreter seated beside her. She spoke in a soft, quiet voice and tended to look down. She looked elegant in a silk blouse and black flared pants.

About her nude scene, Rinko said, "To me, that was the most important scene in the movie. My character is very sensitive. She wants to be touched because by touching, she feels that's the only way to hold onto something. She's also very sexual. That (nudity) is her way of expressing herself. I didn't have any problem doing the nude scene."

She added, "Alejandro was very considerate. He tried to bring the crew size to as small as possible. Everything was set up first and then it was just a limited number of people around when we did the scene."

Rinko narrated how she landed the breakthrough role for which she is being bruited about as a Best Supporting Actress contender in the coming awards season. "The first selection process was done by video audition," she began. "I passed that and then Alejandro came to Japan. Originally, he wanted to find actresses who were really mute. It took about a year from the time I auditioned to the time I got the offer. So in between, I prepared myself and studied sign language."

Alejandro said that Rinko stood out in the auditions but he was "disappointed" to learn that she is not really deaf-mute. However, she blew him away in her next audition because by that time, she has mastered sign language in her dogged determination to win the role.

PENELOPE Cruz sports prosthetic buttocks like Dustin Hoffman's in "Tootsie."

Prosthetic buttocks

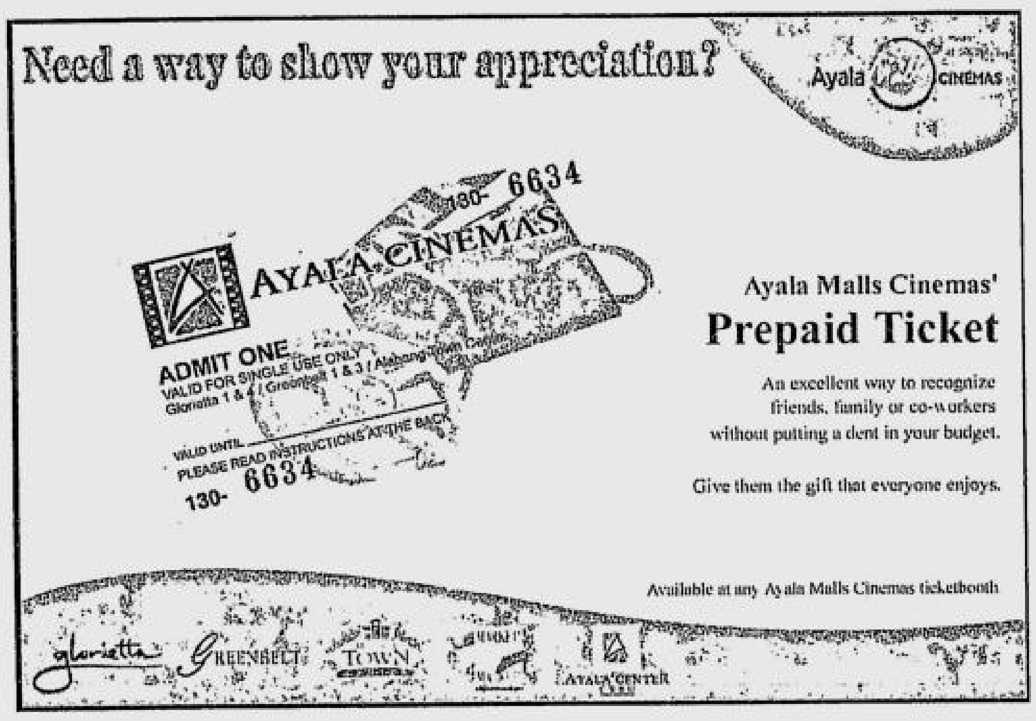
We reported here that top Spanish director **Pedro Almodóvar** made **Penelope Cruz** wear prosthetic buttocks in "Volver" because he wanted her to evoke those buxom women of Italian neo-realist cinema like **Sophia Loren** and **Anna Magnani.** It sounded lofty, no? But in a recent interview, Penelope told us that Pedro's real inspiration was the derriere of … **Dustin Hoffman** as a transvestite in "Tootsie"?!

Penelope, who is looking even more smashing these days, said, "After the second month of rehearsing for the movie, we started to do costume fittings. One day, I decided to try it (prosthetic derriere) half-jokingly and we liked what it did for me, in the way I looked and walked. So we kept it for the whole movie."

A possible Best Actress contender for her performance in "Volver" (which is Spain's entry in the Oscar race for Best Foreign Language Film), Penelope went on, "Now, there's a lot of great stories because Pedro said that the inspiration was Dustin Hoffman's butt in 'Tootsie' (laughter). Reporters have asked Dustin what he thinks about me wearing his butt from that movie. They think it's the exact prosthetic that he used. So now there are quotes from Dustin about me wearing his butt."

RINKO KIKUCHI: Bold, daring and acclaimed in "Babel"

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.



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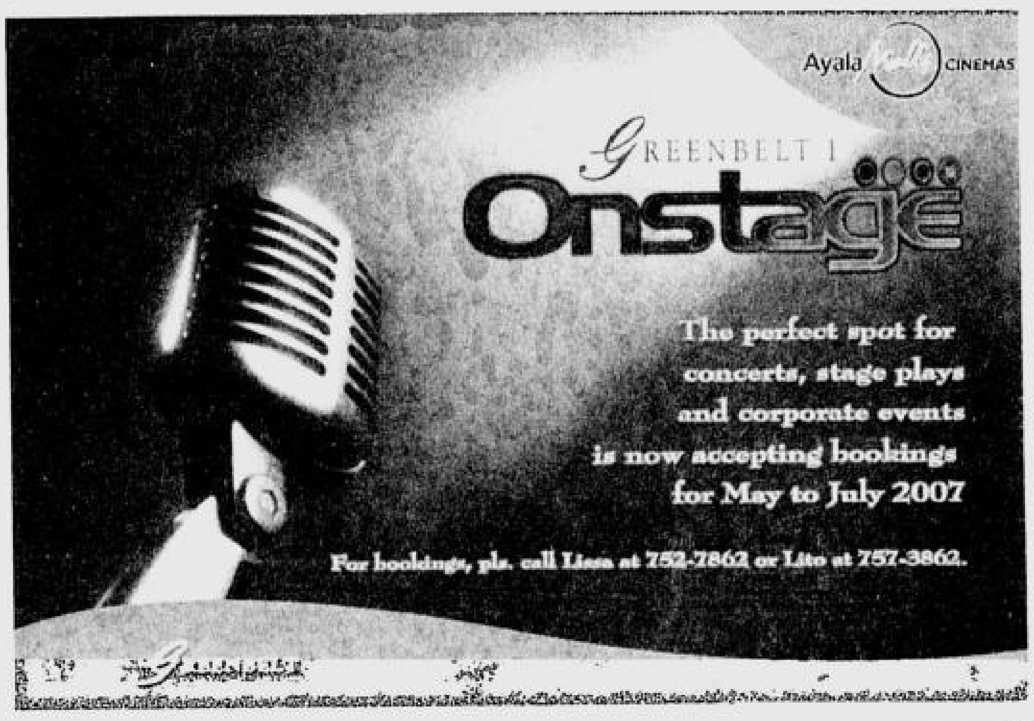

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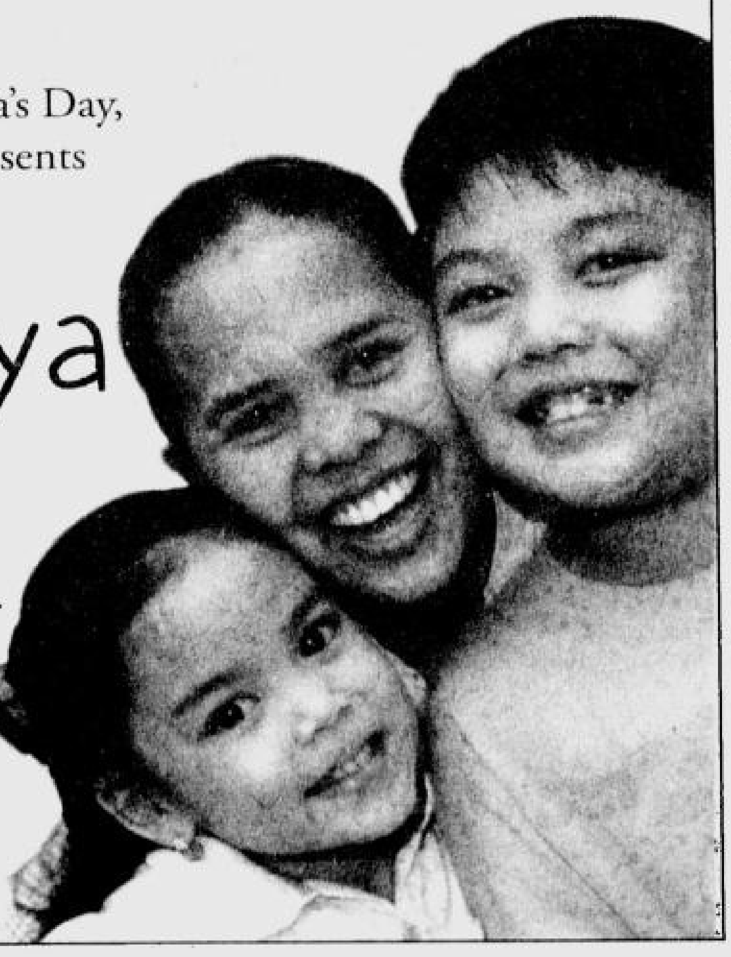

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Dong Abay's second wind

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

REVIEW

BEFORE BAMBOO AND JAY Contreras, there was Dong Abay.

As far as intensity in performance and lyrical substance were concerned, Abay was at the top of his game as vocalist and co-writer of the band Yano. In 1994, Yano's self-titled debut album sold millions for its record company and is often cited by many musicians as a very influential recording.

But that was 12 years ago. Abay's intensity went largely misdirected as to nearly cause him to short-circuit mentally for good. After disbanding Yano and going through a rather short-lived incarnation in Pan (with ex-Bagong Lumad and former Yano sideman Onie Badiang), Abay has now been given the opportunity by well-meaning friends to start anew.

The result is a new CD whose quirky title, "Flipino" (Synergy Records), should not be taken offensively, no matter if Abay feels that the Pinoy Everyman has had enough hardship as to really go bonkers these days.

Neither does it matter if Abay has resorted to cutesy conceit by respelling his name like a hip Netizen (dongabay), to go with his bald pate and Van Dyke beard.

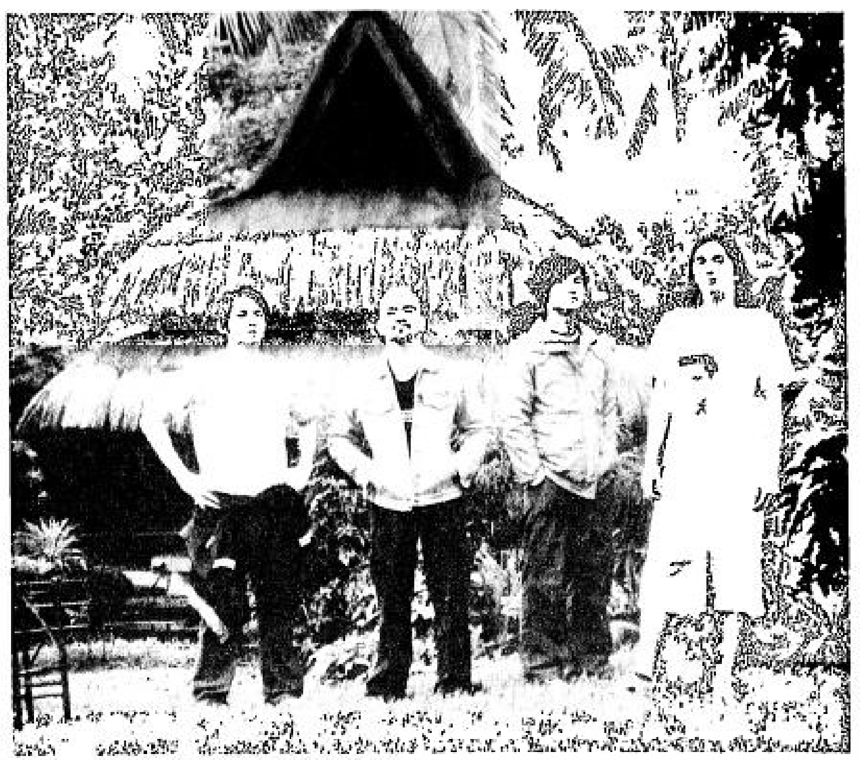
The question is, can Abay still hack it?

To those who skipped listening to Yano's last two albums, there's enough reason to get interested this time around. In "Flipino," Abay is joined in the recording by half of the ex-Eraserheads, Buddy Zabala on bass and Raimund Marasigan on drums and synthesizers. Add to this the presence of another E-head figure, Robin Rivera as producer, and it would seem that Abay has all his bases covered.

But those expecting to hear some fine guitar work reminiscent of Eric Gancio (Yano's other half), forget it. There's no vintage slashing riff nor a truly memorable lick on any of the tracks here. However, Abay has recruited a promising young guitarist, Vinti Lava, who may develop and find his own guitar voice in future outings. Besides, listening closely to the classic Yano debut would reveal that Gancio copied most of his riffs anyway from the Clash and the Ramones.

Which brings us to the heart of the matter. Has Abay achieved in his new work the once-stunning "originality" or distinctive quality that his older songs had been known for?

The good news is there's enough material in "Flipino" that would, for instance, lead our collective psyche to come to terms with the harshness of life in these parts. Abay is quite effective as a storyteller, a narrator of contemporary events that, although depressing in nature, sounds compelling in its cinematic vision.


BACK on track. Dong Abay (second from left) is joined by band mates (from left) Vinti Lava, Abe Billano and R2 Pioquindo.

The sad tales of OFWs and child-abuse victims go through a counterpoint in the black humor of the song's title, "Awit ng Kambing," which is taken from the wailing in the chorus: "Trahe-ehe-ehe-trahe-ehe-ehe-dya ..."

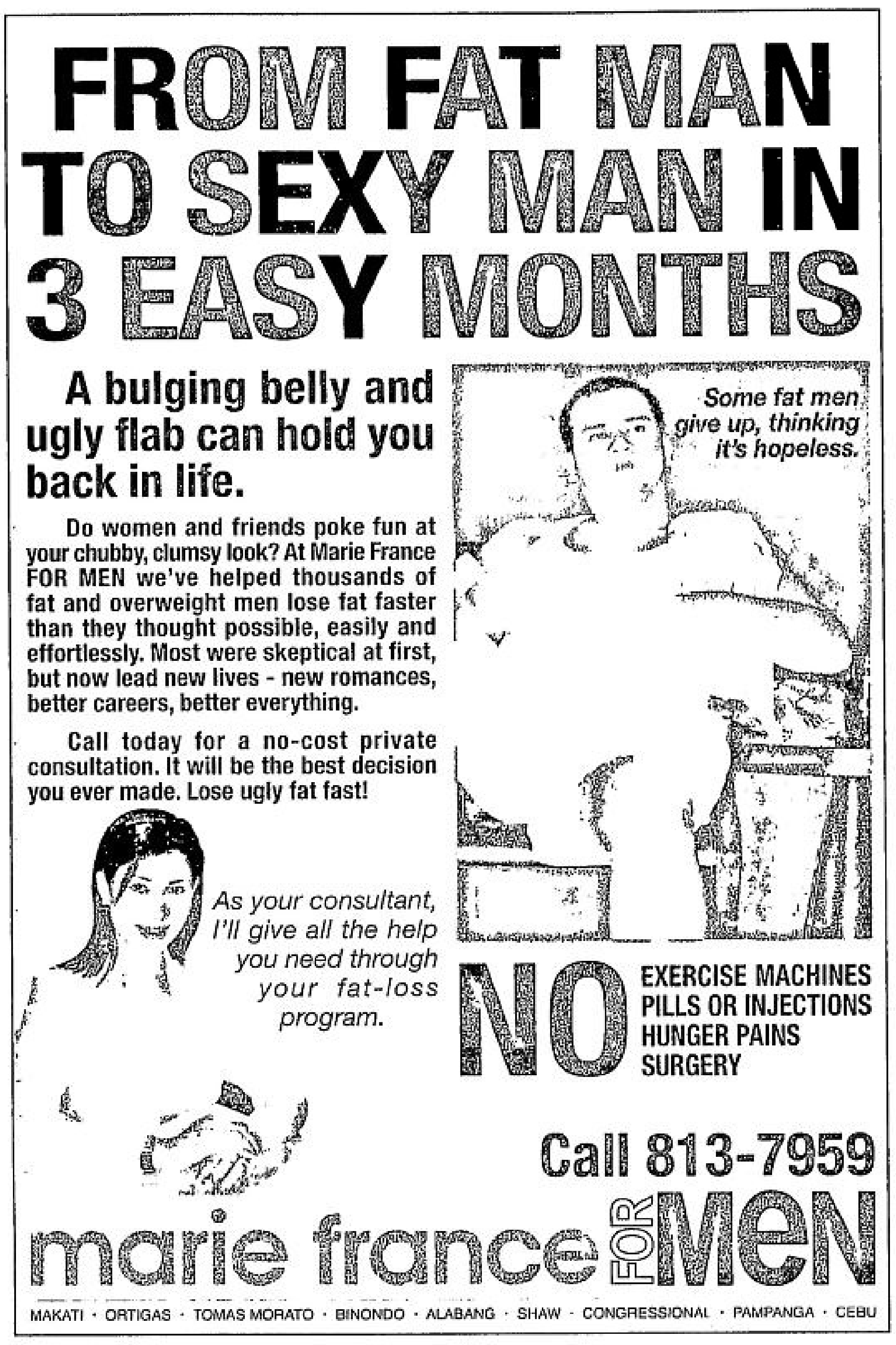
The wayward lives of rugby-sniffing street kids in "Solb" are portrayed in exacting detail that climaxes with euphoric clarity in the refrain, in which Abay does a rare falsetto: "High na high ... sa highway ..."

Equally noteworthy are the lighthearted analogy that precedes environmental decay in "Tuyo"; the riotous assault of consumer brands featuring a barrage of big-name competitors ("Shoemart o Robinsons," "Globe o Smart," including "Star o Inquirer") in "Bombardment"; the romantic overtures in the cryptically titled "Dyad"; the twin odes to a poverty-stricken existence ("Mateo Singko," "Ay Buhay") and the clever wordplay that tries to ease the misery of the physically/mentally challenged in "Perpekto."

While this is not a perfect album given the self-indulgence so obvious in the personal misgivings Abay rattles off in "Espasyo" and "Akrostik," including the remorse he expresses in "Aba Aba" and the wordplay that sometimes go overboard, it's still fair to say that "Flipino" deserves closer contact with a larger audience. An exhaustive nationwide concert tour could spell the difference. (Currently, the track "Perpekto" has been given airplay on FM radio, but only in Metro Manila.)

If the poor toiling masses, for which "Flipino" is about, could afford to buy and appreciate the CD, Abay may yet surpass the kind of success he had with Yano.

That is, granting that he also keeps his ego in check.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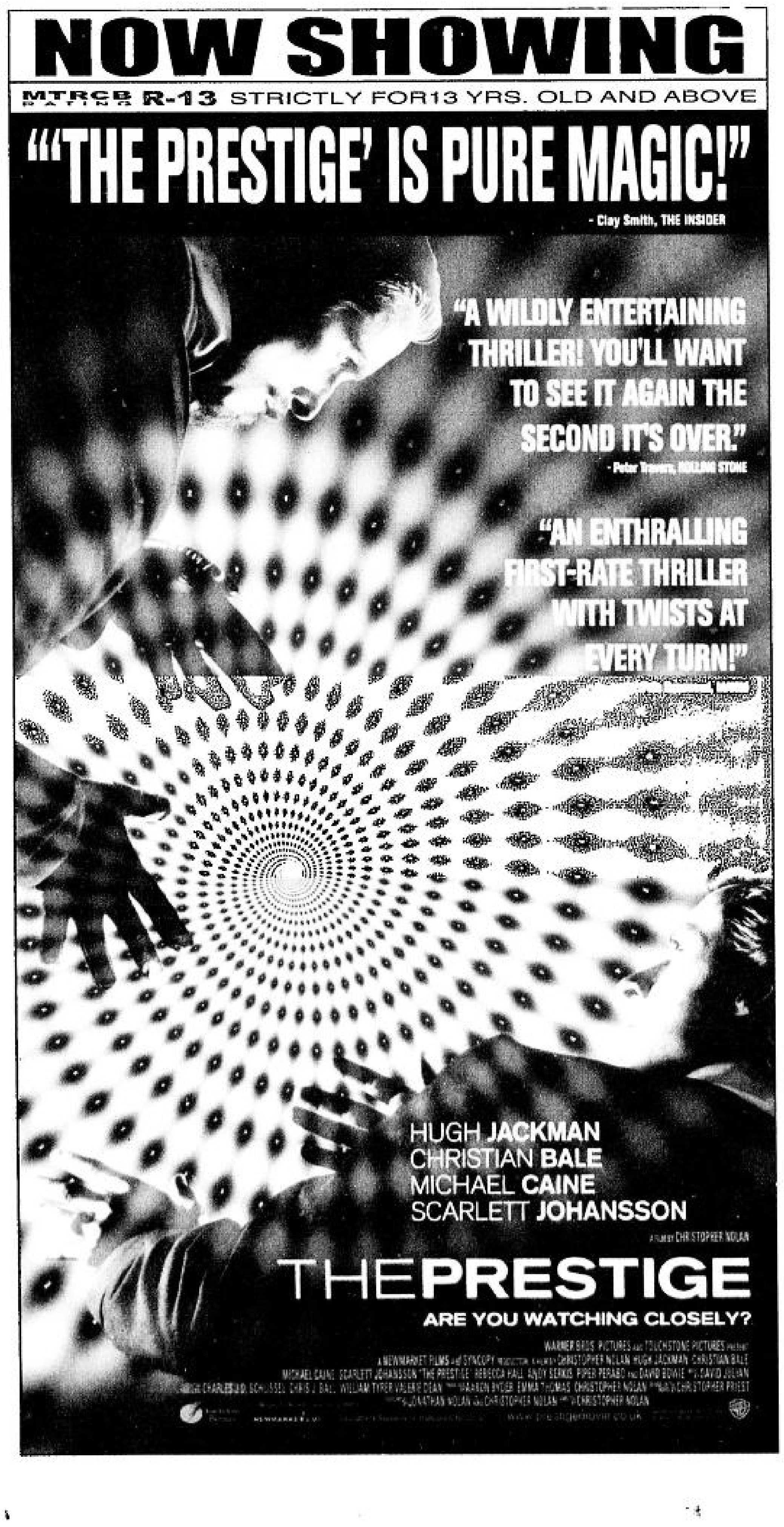
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Aliw Awards faces resignation en masse

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

GOT A COPY OF THE RESIGNATION LETTER of the board of Trustees of Aliw Awards Inc., composed of **Nestor Cuartero**, **Beth Tagle**, **Mildred Templo**, **Jeanne Monteverde**, **Charo Yu**, **Resty Vergara**, **Evelyn Diao**, **John Cenica**, **Marilou Rodriguez** and **Arlene Tobias**. It's dated Oct. 20 and addressed to the founding president Ms. **Alice Reyes**. To quote a portion of their letter: "We tried several attempts to meet with you to discuss the problems of the Aliw caused by the misrepresentation of the current president but it only falls on deaf ears, so it leaves us no choice." Hmm ... Looks like the alleged anomalies within Aliw have reached "nakakabALIW" proportions already!

> The alleged anomalies within Aliw have reached 'nakakabaliw' proportions

Guess list

• Guess who this son of a producer/director/bank owner is. He has pending labor cases for non-payment of salaries and illegal dismissal. Considering the amount of bouncing checks he has issued, he better brace himself for the karma that's bound to bounce back at him.

One of his victims is the sister of a singer/actress. She lamented, "He promised to pay me many times but it looks like it's impossible *na*. I don't care if I don't get paid anymore. I'm filing charges against him *kasi marami na kaming naisahan niya*. May it be a warning to others not to trust him when it comes to business and money matters." Money talks and all it says to the director's son is, "Goodbye!"

• Guess who this host/actress is. Her stylist resigned because she can no longer stand her arrogant ways. As the stylist puts it, "Feeling *niya sikat na sikat na siya eh wala pa naman siyang napapatunayan sa industriya*!" She shouts at the staff of her show and embarrasses them in front of so many people. Even her Tagalog instructor isn't spared. Looks like her language teacher ought to give her lessons on good manners, too. Her good looks don't go well with her bad attitude!

F.Y.I. (For Your Indulgence)

• I enjoyed being interviewed by **Miriam Quiambao** for her new show with **Winnie Monsod** titled "Palaban" (airing November). I asked her if she's ready for a new romance after splitting up with her Italian husband. "I'm not looking for love. It will come. Right now, I'd rather focus on my advocacies for children. It makes me get out of myself. *Mabait naman* my ex. *Di lang talaga kami magkasundo*." Culture clash? So will her next BF be Pinoy? "It doesn't matter whether Pinoy or not. What's important is he will love me for who I am and allow me to grow." Miriam may be first runner-up in the Miss Universe pageant but in a man's heart she must be the reigning queen.

• **Cass Ponti** says she lost weight because of her super tight costume for "Enteng Kabisote 3." I teased her: "What if **Vic Sotto** didn't have a GF and he courts you? Especially after he sees how sexy you are on the cover of Maxim!" She blushed. "*Wala pa kaming eksena sa* movie together. *Sayang nga may* **Pia Guanio** *na siya pero mas maganda naman sa akin 'yon*." I teased her some more: "You can still snatch him away because he's not yet married!" She laughed. "*Pangit 'ata pakinggan ang* Cass Sotto! *Parang* Ka Sotto. Rhyme *sa* Kapuso (laughter)." Kapamilya is all she wants to be.

Silver belle

Tessie Tomas is the very first comedienne who dared to venture into impersonation. Ironically, she's an original when it comes to "duplication." A first-rate, not a trying-hard "copycat," that is.

She celebrates her 25th year in the biz via a stand-up comedy series, "TT@ 25"at Tavern on the Square on Oct. 27, Nov. 4, 11 and 18.

Her tip for aspiring comics? "I have nothing against gay stand-up comedians. *Maraming magaling sa kanila*. But it would be better if instead of making fun of the audience, they prepare their material. *Hindi 'yong* they will depend *na lang sa* audience *kung sinong gusto nila pag-tripan*."

PR awards

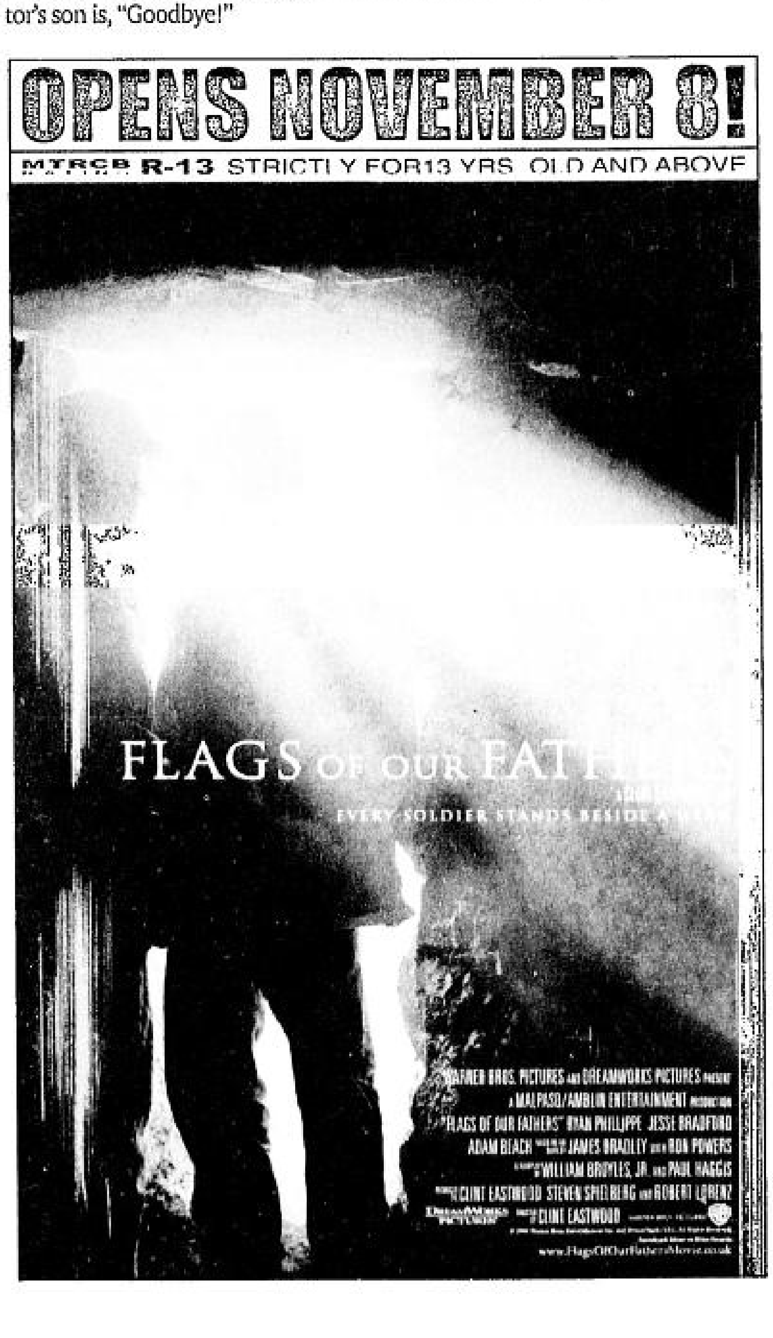
The Anvil Awards, the Oscars of PR, is given by a distinguished multi-sectoral jury to outstanding PR programs. Interested contenders have until Oct. 31 to submit their entries to the Anvil Awards Committee, chaired this year by **Butch Raquel**, VP for External Affairs of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines and head of Corporate Communications of GMA Network.

For details, call 6380010/12 or log on to http://ww.prsp.ph.

Personal

Birthday hugs to my "sis in Christ" **Boy Abunda**. You've got it all in ABUNDAnce, my love! ... Birthday kisses to my friend **Tintin Babao**. Your smiles will never grow old ... Birthday cheers to my Salma Hayek lookalike *inaanak* **Camille Carvajal**.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.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INSIDE

- Guess who came to Merk's nth birthday party/H3
- Guess who is Gardo's new housemate/H4

PHOTO BY EDWIN BACASMAS

AMALIA FUENTES

The TV room is my "private" space. It's a mini-home theater. I read somewhere that it's not advisable to have a television set in the master bedroom because it drives a wedge between a married couple. That's why I converted my daughter Liezl's old bedroom into a TV room. There are three La-Z-Boy reclining chairs that have cup holders here. I sit in the middle chair. This is where I go to relax in the afternoons. If you notice, there's no telephone here. I don't want to be disturbed by calls when I'm watching movies on DVD and cable. My favorite channel is TCM—Turner Classic Movies. *Bayani San Diego Jr.*

PHOTO BY EDWIN BACASMAS

JACLYN JOSE

My daughter Andi won the family's pet, a Mini Pinscher, in a raffle held in a party. We named her Maxi in honor of the award-winning independent film "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros." It was because Andi's teacher had asked them to draw lots for a school project—a review of a Filipino movie—and, as luck would have it, she picked "Maximo." Andi wants to make indie movies in the future. We really need to walk Maxi more. But she is so hyper and goes wild every time Andi and my son Gwen take her out of the house. *Bayani San Diego Jr.*

PHOTO BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

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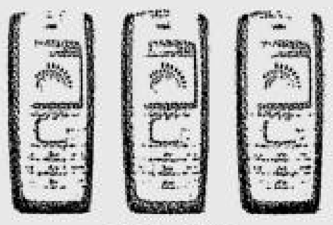

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Cruise to wed Holmes on Nov. 18

NEW YORK—TOM CRUISE AND KATIE HOLMES, HOLLYWOOD'S most high-profile engaged couple, will marry in Italy on Nov. 18, Cruise's representative Arnold Robinson confirmed to The Associated Press on Tuesday.

Holmes, 27, and Cruise, 44, became engaged in June 2005. Their daughter Suri, born April 18, made her debut on the cover of Vanity Fair magazine last month.

Holmes, who starred in TV's "Dawson's Creek," was previously engaged to actor Chris Klein. Cruise, previously married to Mimi Rogers and Nicole Kidman, also had a high-profile romance with Penelope Cruz.

AP

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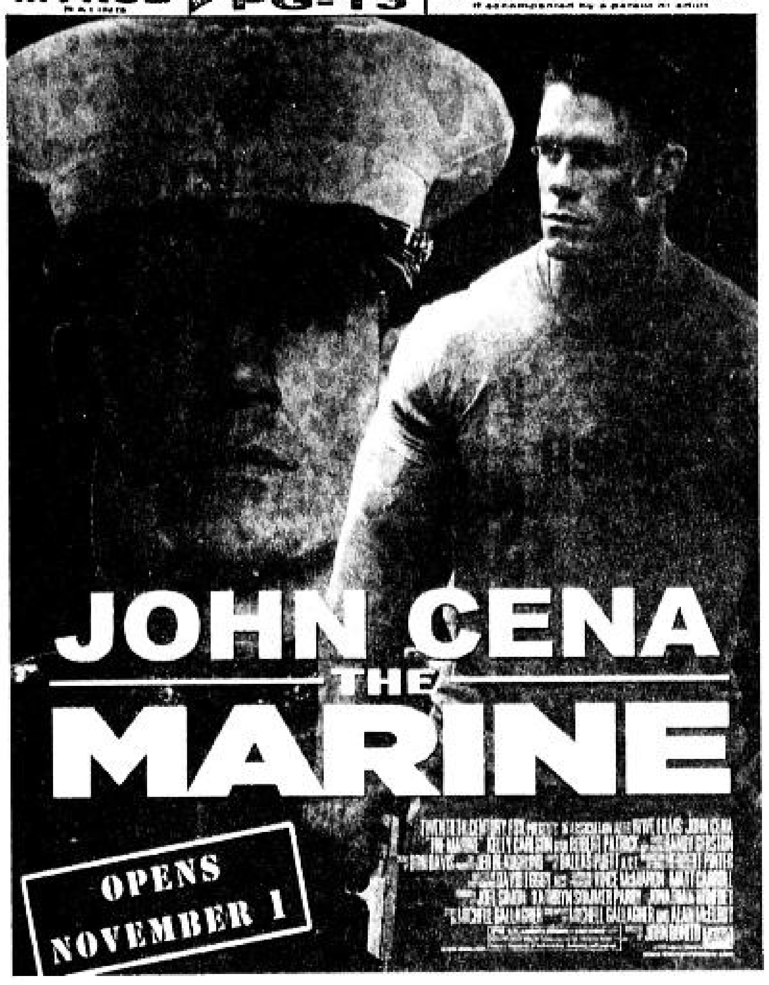

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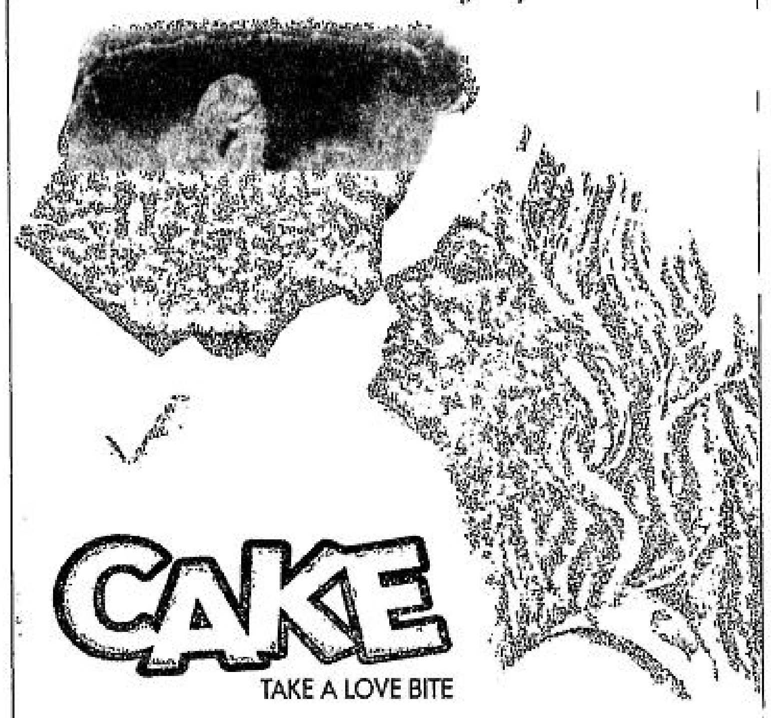

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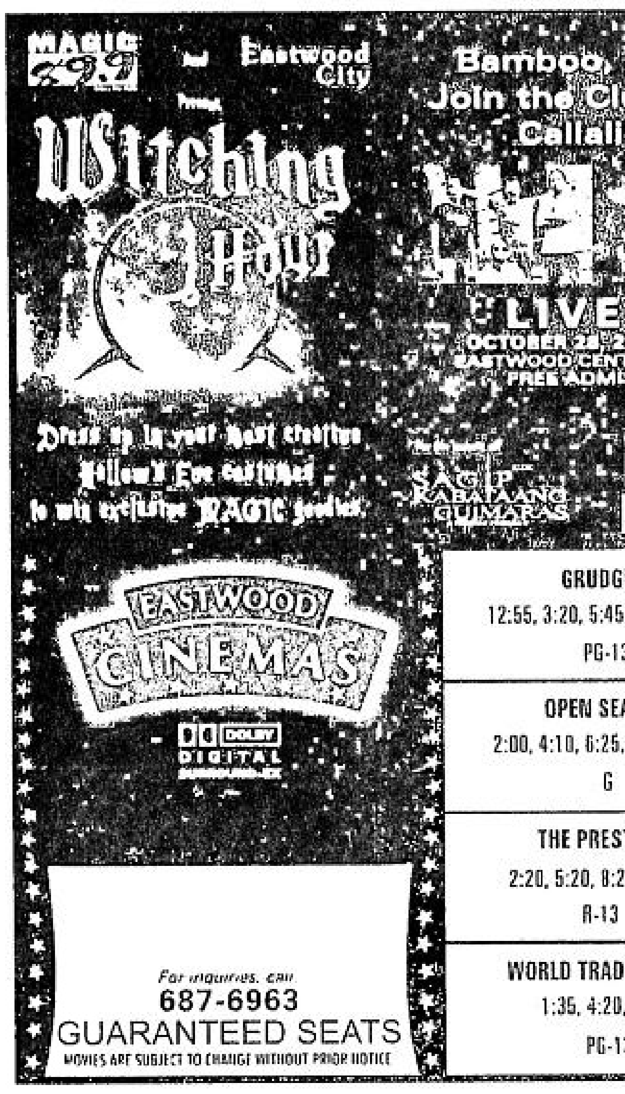
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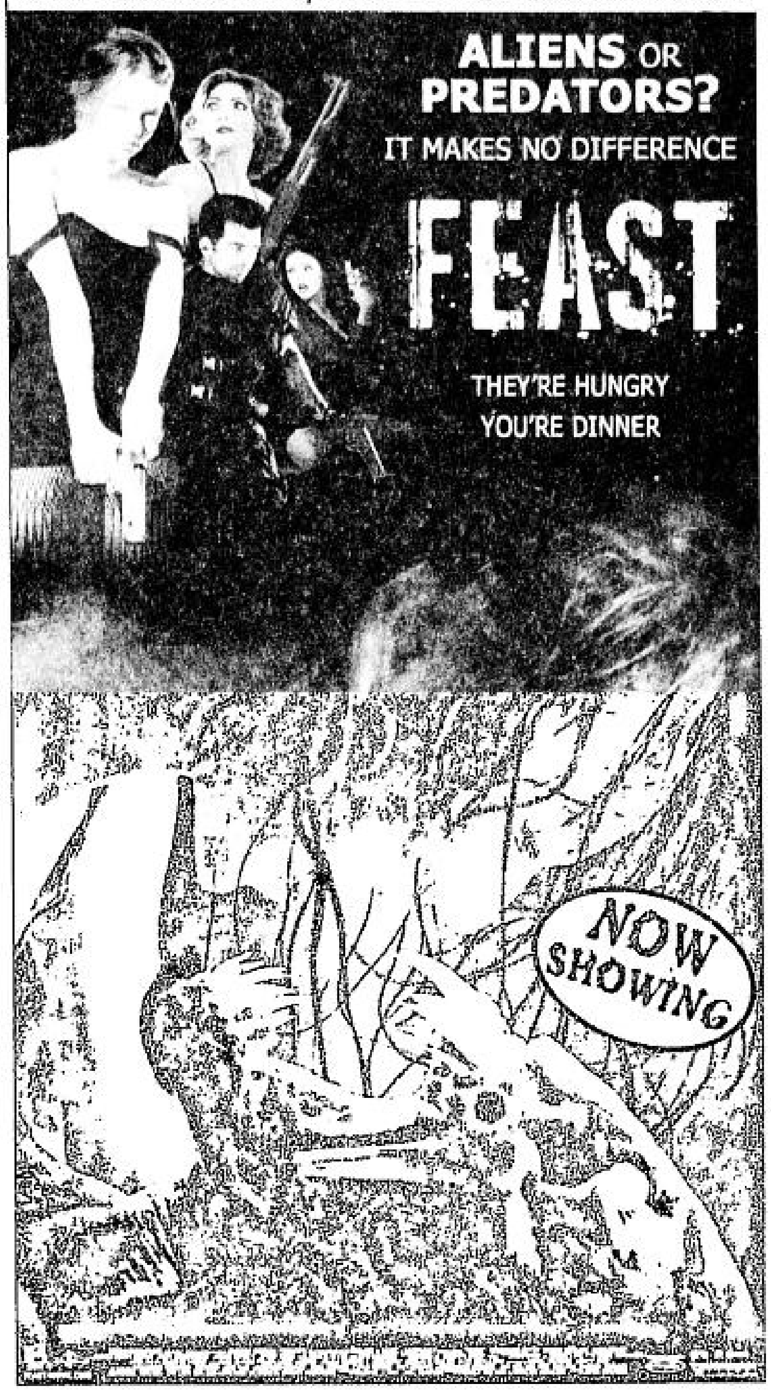

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 FEAST	2 THE GRUDGE 2	3 WORLD TRADE CENTER	4 THE PRESTIGE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	3 THX CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 WORLD TRADE CENTER	5 OPEN SEASON	6 THE PRESTIGE	7 THE GRUDGE 2
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 THE GRUDGE 2	2 THE PRESTIGE		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE GRUDGE 2 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE PRESTIGE GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 THE DEPARTED GUARANTEED SEATS	4 OPEN SEASON GUARANTEED SEATS	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE PRESTIGE GUARANTEED SEATS	2 OPEN SEASON		
	3 THE GRUDGE 2	4 THE DEPARTED	5 WORLD TRADE CENTER	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE PRESTIGE	2 OPEN SEASON	3 THE GRUDGE 2	4 PULSE
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE GRUDGE 2	2 OPEN SEASON		
	3 THE BANQUET	4 WORLD TRADE CENTER	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	

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AYALA CENTER CEBU
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PARTY! PARTY!

RICHARD MERK and wife Roni

Jazzman marks a milestone

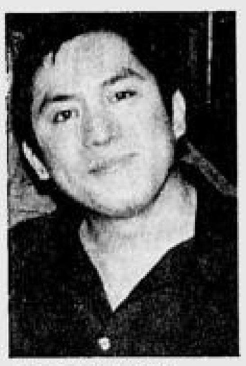
IT WAS AN INTIMATE party for jazzman Richard Merk, who celebrated his nth birthday last Oct. 14 with family and friends at his four-year-old Merk's Bar and Bistro.

Partying the night away with Richard were actor Ricky Davao, singing couple Robert Seña and Isay Alvarez, jazz chanteuse Jacqui Magno, restaurateur Larry Cruz, director Al Quinn, entrepreneur Francis Lumen and newspaper executive Grace Glory Go, among others.

"I really thank God for giving me this new life and another chance to enjoy my blessings with my family," said Richard, who spent most of the night with wife Roni Tapia. "This birthday is really very meaningful with the inspiration of Manna and the all-out support given to me by my wife Roni."

Manna is the name of Richard's five-year-old daughter with Roni, who moved him to write a song entitled, well, "Manna." It will be part of his Christmas album titled "Merk Christmas."

ISAY ALVAREZ



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TILL I MET YOU
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RESERVED
CINEMA 1
THE PRESTIGE
CINEMA 2
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1 THE BANQUET
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 WORLD TRADE CENTER
5 TILL I MET YOU
6 WORLD TRADE CENTER
7 THE DEPARTED
8 TXT
9 PULSE
10 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
11 BARANG
12 THE BANQUET

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 OPEN SEASON
2 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 PHILIPPINE IDOL
4 JOSEPH THE DREAMER
5 THE DEPARTED
6 THE PRESTIGE
7 FEAST
8 THE GRUDGE 2
9 TXT
10 TILL I MET YOU
11 THE GUARDIAN
12 THE BANQUET

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 ANNAPOLIS
2 THE BANQUET
3 FEAST
4 WORLD TRADE CENTER
5 THE GRUDGE 2
6 BARANG
7 THE PRESTIGE
8 TILL I MET YOU
9 TXT
10 PULSE
11 THE GUARDIAN
12 OPEN SEASON

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 THE GRUDGE 2
2 THE PRESTIGE
3 WORLD TRADE CENTER
4 OPEN SEASON
5 TILL I MET YOU
6 FEAST
7 THE BANQUET
8 BARANG
9 TXT
10 THE GUARDIAN

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 THE GRUDGE 2
2 THE PRESTIGE
3 FEAST
4 OPEN SEASON
5 WORLD TRADE CENTER
6 TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 THE GRUDGE 2
2 OPEN SEASON
3 THE PRESTIGE
4 FEAST
5 TILL I MET YOU
6 TXT
7 THE GUARDIAN
8 OPEN SEASON
9 BARANG

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 THE PRESTIGE
2 OPEN SEASON
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE GRUDGE 2

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 THE PRESTIGE
2 STICK IT
3 BARANG
4 TXT
5 OPEN SEASON
6 THE GRUDGE 2
7 PULSE
8 THE GUARDIAN
9 WORLD TRADE CENTER
10 TILL I MET YOU
11 THE BANQUET
12 FEAST

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 OPEN SEASON
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 TXT
4 WORLD TRADE CENTER

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
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2 THE GUARDIAN
3 TILL I MET YOU
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3 TILL I MET YOU
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3 THE GRUDGE 2
4 THE PRESTIGE
5 TXT
6 TILL I MET YOU
7 WORLD TRADE CENTER
8 OPEN SEASON

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 OPEN SEASON
2 THE PRESTIGE
3 THE GRUDGE 2
4 FLY BOYS
5 TILL I MET YOU
6 TXT

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1 OPEN SEASON
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 TXT
4 THE GUARDIAN

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SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 THE DEPARTED
2 OPEN SEASON
3 FLY BOYS
4 TXT

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 TXT
2 OPEN SEASON
3 THE GRUDGE 2
4 THE PRESTIGE
5 MY FIRST WEDDING
6 TILL I MET YOU

SM CITY LIPA
1 TXT
2 OPEN SEASON
3 THE DEPARTED
4 TILL I MET YOU

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1 OPEN SEASON
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 WICKER MAN
4 THE DEPARTED

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2 OPEN SEASON
3 FLY BOYS
4 TILL I MET YOU

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2 TILL I MET YOU
3 TXT
4 THE BANQUET

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1 TILL I MET YOU
2 THE BREED
3 OPEN SEASON
4 TXT

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1 THE PRESTIGE
2 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 THE GUARDIAN
4 OPEN SEASON
5 PULSE
6 THE DEPARTED
7 TILL I MET YOU
8 THE GRUDGE 2

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1 DEAD OR ALIVE
2 RESERVED
3 THE BREED
4 OPEN SEASON
5 THE GUARDIAN
6 STEP UP
7 RESERVED
8 PULSE

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1 THE GRUDGE 2
2 OPEN SEASON
3 TILL I MET YOU
4 PULSE
5 STEP UP
6 THE GUARDIAN

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3 THE GUARDIAN
4 FLY BOYS

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1 THE BANQUET • THX
1:50 4:35 7:20 10.00
2 THE PRESTIGE
1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
3 THE DEPARTED
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00
4 OPEN SEASON
1:25 3:30 5:35 7:40 9.50
5 THE GRUDGE 2
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
6 WORLD TRADE CENTER
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
7 FEAST
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
8 TXT
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
9 THE GUARDIAN
1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
10 TILL I MET YOU
12:25 2:45 5:05 7:25 9:45

ERMITA 36-7809 to 12
1 THE GRUDGE 2
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
2 OPEN SEASON
12.20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
3 TXT
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9.50
4 TILL I MET YOU
12:30 2:50 5:10 7.25 9:50
5 WORLD TRADE CENTER
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
6 FEAST
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
7 THE PRESTIGE
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8195 • 682-8199
1 WORLD TRADE CENTER
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00
2 THE GRUDGE 2
11:30 1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10
3 OPEN SEASON
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10
4 TILL I MET YOU
11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00
5 TXT
1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00
6 FEAST
12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10
7 THE PRESTIGE
12.40 3:20 6:10 9.00
8 THE GUARDIAN
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30
1 THE GRUDGE 2
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 OPEN SEASON
4 THE PRESTIGE

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575
1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
2 TILL I MET YOU
3 RESERVE
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2 OPEN SEASON
3 THE BREED
4 TILL I MET YOU

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2 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
3 OPEN SEASON
4 TILL I MET YOU

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3 TILL I MET YOU
4 THE GRUDGE 2

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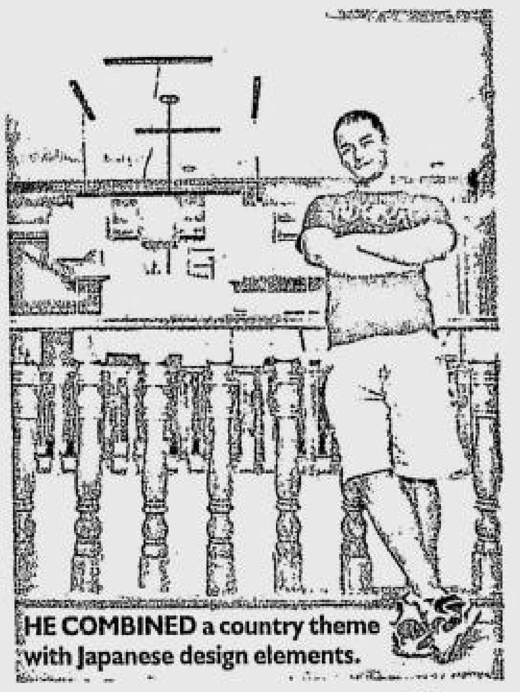
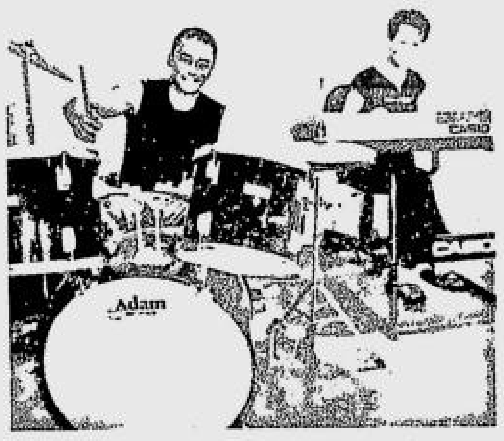
Gardo, unguarded

The hunky actor opens the door to his home and heart

THE HOME theater is Gardo's favorite hangout. This is where he watches movies on DVD, to unwind and to do research for roles. For his latest fantaserye "Atlantika," he reviewed movies like "Braveheart" and "Gladiator."



HE COMBINED a country theme with Japanese design elements.



MOM BABY tinkers on the piano and organ for family gatherings. Gardo plays the drums on his spare time.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Edwin Bacasmas

HUNKY ACTOR GARDO VERSOZA opens the door to his three-level home somewhere in Pasig to INQUIRER Entertainment Living Stars and, in the process, unlocks his heart.

He used to live next door with his mom Baby Polintan. Three years ago, Gardo (Mennen Polintan in real life) built his dream home, which he personally designed, assisted by an architect. "I have a little background in drafting because I took up electrical engineering for two years in college."

His concept was to combine a country theme and modern Japanese design elements, as can be gleaned from the unique lamps and chandeliers.

If you ask Gardo, a visitor would most probably catch him in the gym on the ground floor, the kitchen on the second floor and the home theater in the attic.

"I work out three times a week. It's very practical to exercise at home. You don't have to commute and get stuck in traffic," he explains.

Exercising allows him to indulge in another passion: cooking (and eating).

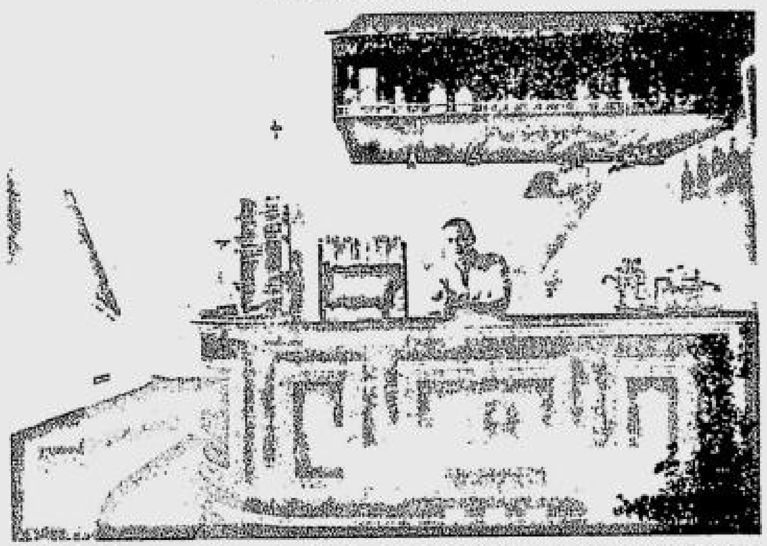
"We're Kapampangan. All the men in our family, including my late father and younger brother, cook. My specialties are *adobo*, *sinigang*, *kare-kare*, pasta and seafood dishes. Friends order my *alimango* and *sugpo* for parties," he relates.

The home theater is where he usually takes his "dates."

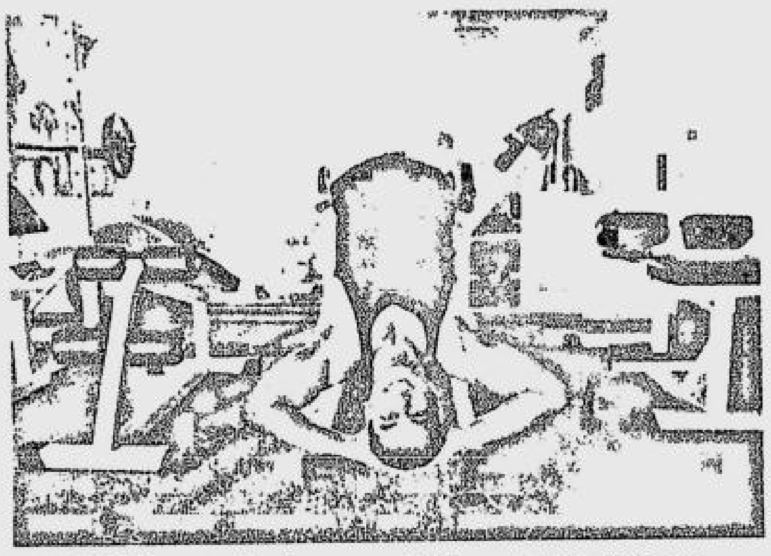
"It's cool, cozy and very private up there," he says with a naughty grin.

In the meantime, however, mom Baby, who underwent angioplasty in the US, is his "constant companion" at home.

"I asked her to move in with me so I can keep an eye on her," the good son clarifies.



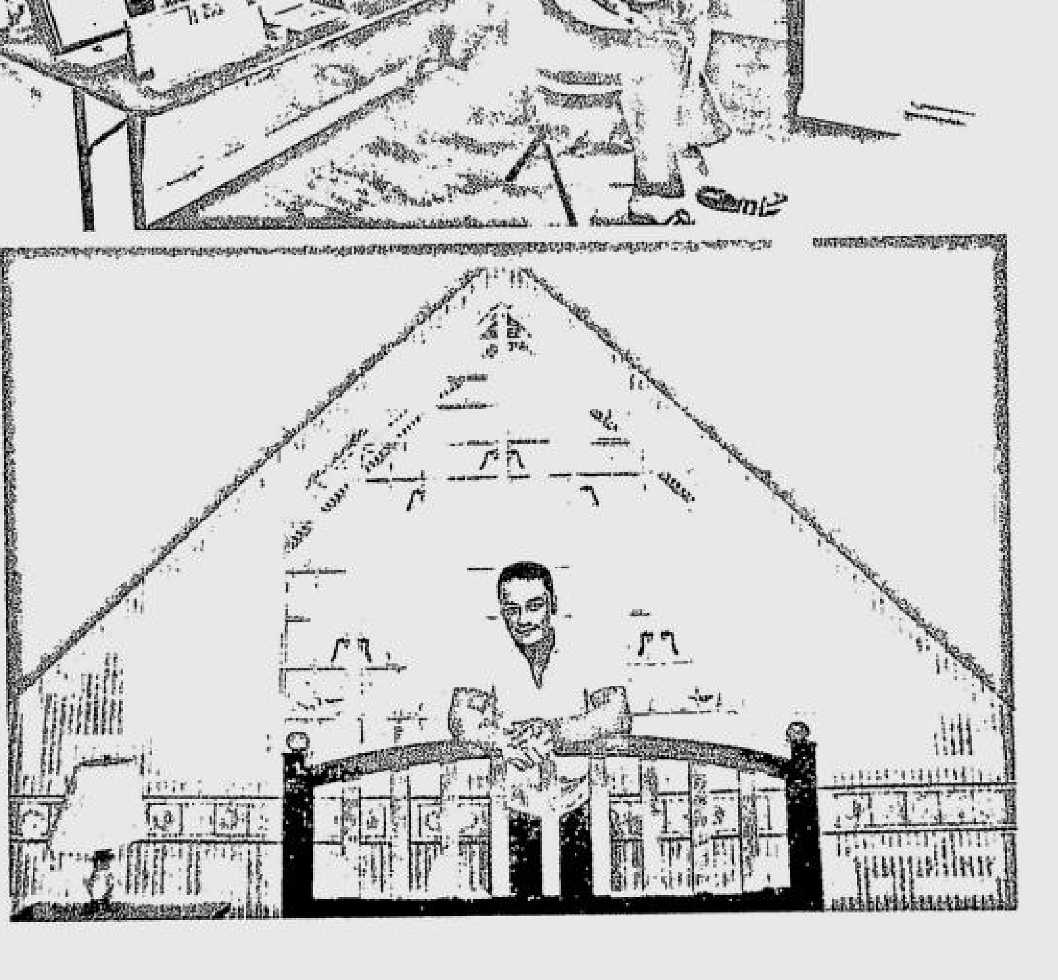
THE BAR in the attic not only displays his wine collection, but also his library of DVDs and CDs.



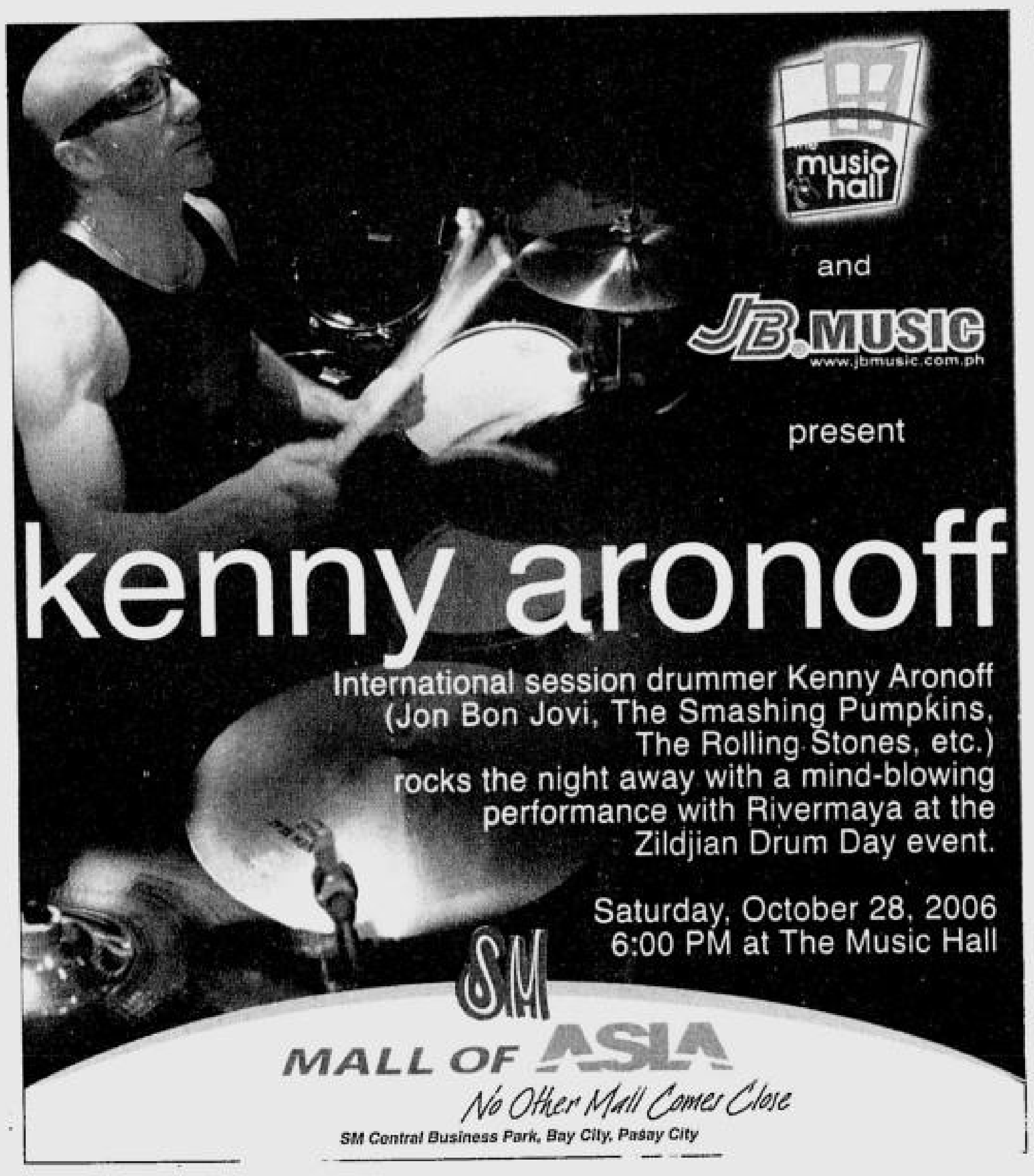
THE HUNK invested in a home gym that boasts state-of-the-art exercise equipment. "It's more practical to work out at home. You can avoid traffic."

VOTE!
CAMILO SAN CARLOS FOR GOVERNOR

GARDO'S mom fusses over family photographs, as well as snapshots from her son's various movie and TV projects—like the gubernatorial campaign poster from the soap opera "It Might Be You."



ONE OF TWO guest rooms in the attic can be converted into a baby's nursery in the future. "Settling down is far from my mind as of now. I still have a lot of unfulfilled dreams." He jokingly calls himself "matandang binata" (old bachelor).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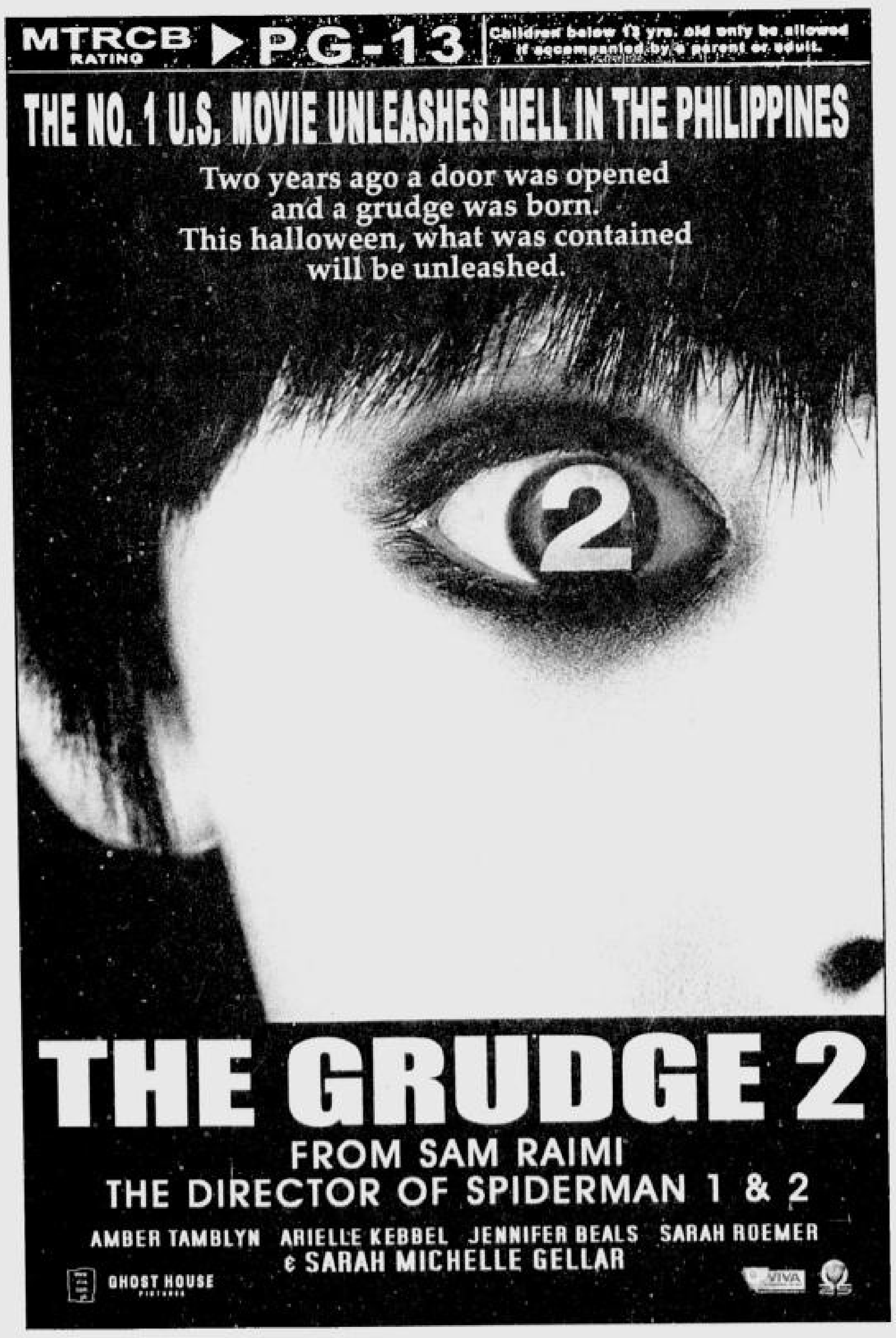
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Here comes the *BUV!*

Nissan's 'Balikbayan Utility Van' stamps a big statement: relatives coming from abroad can bring in large 'pasalubong'

With the projected 400,000 overseas Filipino workers and migrants to visit the country this 2006 Holiday season (according to the Philippine Association of Service Exporters), the demand for "big" multipurpose vehicles would subsequently be huge, as well.

As the hundreds of thousands of holiday balikbayans file out of our international airports and onto home soil, the variety of vehicles picking them up should prove interesting as well. Woe to those who end up with small vehicles, though. The real stars at the greeters' area are the big vans. The big vans bring home the big boxes, so to speak.

But we're not just speaking of the big vans. We're talking humongous, diesel-powered microbuses that can swallow 12 passengers and their treasured luggage. Even road-hogging SUVs can't pack in this many dollar-earners. And these are thrifty vans, with their powerplants choosing diesel over gasoline (nearly P5 cheaper).

For sheer size alone, it will be extremely difficult to ignore the Nissan Urvan Estate. And for its comfy ride, it'll be equally difficult to step out of it.

Taller and longer

Comparing spec sheets, the new Urvan Estate is taller than a Toyota Hi-Ace Commuter Van and longer than the Hi-Ace CV and GL Grandia. The Estate is 4990mm long, versus the CV's 4695mm and the GL Grandia's 4840mm.

The Estate is powered by a 3-liter diesel engine, while the Hi-Ace CV is run by a 2.5-liter turbocharged diesel engine. Max power for the Estate is 105ps/3800rpm, and max torque is 21.3kg-m at 2000 rpm.

The first completely built up (CBU) model of the Urvan Estate was introduced in December 2001. This year, Universal Motors Corp has introduced a completely knocked down (CKD) Urvan Estate with a "softer" ride than its predecessor.

The 400 or so Urvan Estate owners in the country are a varied lot. Some are doctors or businesspeople (and even women involved in trading), agriculturists, those engaged in info-tech, construction, in restaurants. Some are contractors, lawyers. One's a mayor, and there's even an owner who's an actress.

The view from the driver's seat of the Urvan Estate is, to say the least, lofty. At 1,990 mm in height, it feels like you're in a watch tower, seeing the traffic farther ahead than any other private vehicle driver out there. You're almost "up there" with the bus drivers.

The steering also felt light. However, stepping on the clutch pedal took some getting used to since it seemed too small and felt a tad too soft.

The manual gear shifts were placed just right (a crucial observation for a petite lady driver like this writer). In the same breath, however, she misses the vanity mirrors behind the sun visors for both the driver and front passenger.

The Urvan Estate provides a majestic, panoramic view, thanks to its wide windows, side view mirrors and rearview mirror. Parking the Estate, despite its length and size, was surprisingly easy.

To prove the spaciousness of the Urvan Estate, we were able to fit in a multi-tiered computer table at the rear (seats folded) and a pocket-rocket motorcycle on the space between the driver's row and second row.

Noticeable, though was the lack of lap belts or seat belts for the backmost passengers.

The Urvan Estate does, indeed, have a softer ride than its predecessor. Its suspension in front is independent double wishbone torsion bar type with telescopic shock absorbers/stabilizer; while its rear is a rigid axle semi-elliptic leaf spring with telescopic shock absorbers. The front brakes are 15-inch ventilated discs while the rear has drums/automatic brake adjuster and its control valve has load sensing valve.

For us "natives" acting as tour guides for our balikbayans, better bring along jackets. The legendary air-conditioning system of Nissan continues unbroken in this Estate. Well, for our friends and relatives dropping by from places faraway, the jackets are optional. We're sure many of them can't wait to bask in the one-of-a-kind warmth only this side of the world can give. *(Tessa Salazar)*

OPTRA Wagon

OPTRA WAGON 1.6 LS MT/AT
99K DP
ABS, Driver Side Airbag 5-in-dash CD player,
Tonneau Cover & Cargo Net
*Plus Free Chattel Mortgage &
1-yr. Auto Insurance Fee

OPTRA 1.6 LS MT/AT
99K DP
ABS, Driver Side Airbag,
New Metallic Panel Trim,
5-in-dash CD player

AVEO 1.5 L MT/AT
79K DP
ABS, Dual Airbags, 15" Alloy Wheels,
Foglamps, Roof Spoiler

SPARK 1.0 L MT
59K DP
Power Front Windows,
Rear Wipers and Washer,
Front and rear seatbelts (3 pt ELR x 5)
*Plus Free 1-yr Auto Insurance Fee

AVEO 1.2 L MT
79K DP
CD/MP3 Player, Rear Wiper and Washer,
Folding Rear Seats

IN LIFE, TO GET WHAT YOU WANT, THERE'S A SMALL PRICE TO PAY.

An affordable low down to get your dream Chevy.

For everything below ₱100,000 down payment, you can get any Chevrolet passenger car that suits your style and fits your needs. After all, who says fine cars should be expensive. Take advantage of these amazing low downs. Take advantage of owning a Chevrolet.

CHEVROLET WE'LL BE THERE.

*Subject to bank approval

Promo until Nov. 30, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4513. Series of 2006

Test drive today at your nearest Chevrolet/GM dealer: MAKATI 867-8183 to 87 • QUEZON AVENUE 374-1250 TO 59 • SHAW 535-494, 533-6349, 533-8375, 533-1263 • PASIG 672-1612 to 14, 672-1486 • ALABANG 771-1206 to 09 • NORTH EDSA 374-9992 to 97, 374-9963 MANILA 564-0129 • CEBU (032) 234-0426 to 29 • PAMPANGA (045) 963-3333, (045) 860-2000 • DAVAO (082) 300-7777, (082) 235-3811 DAGUPAN (075) 523-7777, (075) 523-1835, (075) 515-5577 • ILOILO (033) 329-2888, (033) 329-2222 • BACOLOD (034) 708-2489

CHEVROLET 24hr. ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

WARRANTY 3 YEARS 100,000 KM (WHICHEVER COMES FIRST)

1800-1888-4646

Asiastar motorcycles: combining high-quality and affordability

THE MOTORCYCLE HAS BEEN THE PREFERRED MODE of transportation of most Filipinos. Perhaps the many realities of the Filipino's current state of life had turned this two-wheeled wonder into a dominant road display.

The motorcycle, for one, is cheaper than cars and trucks- not to mention the good mileage that it can provide per liter of gasoline. Not only this, the motorcycle has also gained popularity amongst the citizens of the metro due to its maneuverability and dynamism. A motorcycle could weave through traffic prone areas. Truly, the motorcycle has gained popularity amongst the majority.

Sinski Motorcycle Philippines recognizes the important role that motorcycles play in the lives of every Filipino. Sinski is a brand that produces high-quality and competitive motorcycles minus the expensive price. The company has lived up to its reputation of being a motorcycle company that is sensitive to the needs of many. Since its operation, the company has produced affordable motorcycle models that have enjoyed great popularity in the country.

From the distributors of Sinski comes another exciting motorcycle line, the Asiastar motorcycles. Like Sinski, Asiastar is a motorcycle brand that utilizes the latest Japanese technology in its production. To comply with the needs of a very diverse market, Asiastar introduced equally diverse units in its product range.

For the bold and adventurous, there is the Lynx 150. This widely acclaimed scooter model has the complete package, the elegant design and great power. The Lynx provides a highly comfortable ride on-road or off-road.

For those in search of the combination of fun and speed, there is the Beta 150. The eye-catching design is complemented by the Beta's technical properties which are at par with scooters in its class.

For the strong and bold, there is the Dmax 150. This unique framed motorcycle is a very strong presence in the road. With the Dmax's aerodynamic presence and speed, reaching your destination is hassle free.

The Nitro 125 has a sleek design that blends well with its great speed and maneuverability. The Nitro can weave through various road conditions and the maneuverability allows the rider to take on streets and even gutters anytime. So, whatever the road condition, Nitro125 is the solution.

The SK 125 is aesthetically pleasing, but there is more to the unit than meets the eye. With its modern design and proven road worthiness, the SK 125 defines what riding in style is all about.

There is an Asiastar model for everyone. For more information on Sinksi and Asiastar motorcycles, log on to www.sinski.com.ph or go to the nearest Sinski dealer in your area.

Gas up with E10 and win a Civic

LOADING UP WITH ETHANOL-blended gasoline is not only good for engines, the economy and the environment. It can even win you a brand new car.

Seaoil, the country's leading seller of ethanol-blended fuel, is giving motorists the chance to win a brand new 2006 Honda Civic through a raffle promo.

Seaoil president Francis Glenn Yu said motorists only have to load a minimum of P300 worth of Seaoil E10 (G5-Xtreme and Unleaded) to be eligible for the raffle.

"This is our way of thanking our E10 customers and celebrating the launching of the country's first ethanol-blended fuels," he said.

Other prizes at stake in the raffle are Nokia N70 cell phones and 90 gift certificates of E10 fuel worth P2,000 each. Raffle draws have been set on Oct. 31, Nov. 30 and Jan 7.

E10 is a regular gasoline blended with 10-percent pure ethanol, giving it a higher octane rating for better combustion.

Introduced last year and priced the same as regular gasoline, E10 has been tried by at least 3 million Filipino motorists who are all satisfied by the increased power it gives.

Based on their experience, these motorists have told Seaoil that the cheaper E10 is even better than more expensive, super premium fuels being sold by other companies.

E10 is a popular fuel in more developed countries like the United States, Europe and Japan where environmental laws are stricter and where motorists are more educated. According to Yu, switching to E10 can improve a car's performance and reduce emissions, which are actually unburned fuel.

"Switching to E10 will make your car burn more efficiently, giving you more pulling power and more miles for your fuel. You don't have to make any modifications to your car to run on E10," he said, adding that even the Chamber of Automobile Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) has acknowledged E10 as a safe fuel for all gasoline-fed vehicles.

SEAOIL
GAS UP WITH E10
FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A HONDA CIVIC
OVER P1,200,000 WORTH OF PRIZES!
PLUS!
GRAND DRAW SPECIAL PRIZE: 15 UNITS OF NOKIA N70
MONTHLY PRIZE: 30 P2,000 WORTH OF FREE GAS
Fuel the Change

MECHANICS:

1. This promo is open to all customers of Seaoil, 18 years old and above.
2. For every P300 minimum single receipt purchase of Seaoil E10 blended gasoline (G5 Xtreme & Unleaded) at any participating outlet, customers earn (1) one raffle coupon.
3. Customers must fill up the coupon with the following information: Name, Address, Contact Number and Signature.
4. Once filled up, customers must drop their coupons in drop boxes located at participating Seaoil gas stations.
5. Customers can win any of the following prizes on the scheduled draws:
   1st Monthly Draw: October 31, 2006
   - 30 winners of P2,000 worth of Free E10 gasoline
   2nd Monthly Draw: November 30, 2006
   - 30 winners of P2,000 worth of Free E10 gasoline
   Grand Draw: January 7, 2007
   - 30 winners of P2,000 worth of Free E10 gasoline
   - 15 winners of NOKIA N70 each, as a special prize.
   - 1 Grand Prize winner of a brand new **Honda Civic.**

Hurry! Promo runs from September 16 to December 19, 2006 only!
The more raffle entries, the better your chances of winning.

METRO MANILA
•Santolan, San Juan
•Gov. Forbes Manila
•Tandang Sora, Quezon City
•[illegible] Manila
•Northbay
•Malabon
•Mindanao Ave
•Commonwealth
•St. Dominic, Quezon City
•Cainta
•Binangonan
•Merville, Parañaque
•Sucat
•EDSA
•Pasig Blvd
•[illegible]
•[illegible]
•A. Bonifacio
•Panaderos
•Paco
•E. Rodriguez
•P. Tuazon
•Gulod Novaliches
•Taguig
•Marikina

NORTH LUZON
•Bani, Pangasinan
•Dasol, Pangasinan
•Malasiqui Pangasinan
•Paombong Bulacan
•Baguio Benguet
•San Miguel Bulacan
•Sta. Rosa Nueva Ecija
•San Antonio Nueva Ecija
•Zaragoza Nueva Ecija
•Talavera, Nueva Ecija
•Guimba Nueva Ecija
•Bayombong Nueva Vizcaya
•[illegible] Rizal Kalinga
•Alicia Isabela
•Ilagan Isabela
•Baler Aurora

SOUTH LUZON
•Indang Cavite
•Silang Cavite
•Sta. Rosa Laguna
•Calamba Laguna
•Tuy Batangas
•Nasugbu Batangas
•Agoncillo Batangas
•San Juan Batangas
•Cupang Muntinlupa
•[illegible] Batangas
•Lemery Batangas
•Balayan, Batangas
•San Pascual Batangas
•Muzon Batangas
•Sampaloc Quezon
•Lucena Quezon
•Siniloan Laguna
•Alfonso Cavite
•Tiaong Quezon
•Oas Albay
•Polangui Albay
•Irosin Sorsogon
•Tinambac, Camarines Sur

VISAYAS
•Lopez-Jaena and Rizal Street, Bacolod City
•Gonzaga Subdivision, Bacolod City
•Tangub, Bacolod City
•Circumferential Road, Bacolod City
•Bata, Bacolod City

MINDANAO
•Turno Dipolog City
•Galas Dipolog City
•Roxas Zamboanga del Norte
•Jose Dalman, Zamboanga del Norte
•Salug Zamboanga del Norte
•Liloy Zamboanga del Norte
•Labason Zamboanga del Norte
•Titay, Zamboanga Sibugay
•Ipil Zamboanga Sibugay
•[illegible] Dipolog City
•Imelda Zamboanga Sibugay
•Calamba Misamis Occidental
•Plaridel, Misamis Occidental
•Talic, Oroquieta City
•Sinonoc, Misamis Occidental
•Maningcol Ozamis City
•Lam-an, Ozamis City
•Molave Zamboanga del Sur
•Dumingag Zamboanga del Sur
•Bonifacio Misamis Occidental
•Aurora Zamboanga del Sur
•[illegible] Pagadian City
•Tawagan Sur Pagadian City
•[illegible] San Miguel Zamboanga del Sur
•Pitogo Zamboanga del Sur
•Maranding Lala Lanao del Norte
•Camague Iligan City
•Hinaplanon Iligan City
•Baloi Lanao del Norte
•Gadongan Marawi City
•Matampay, Marawi City
•Diplahan Zamboanga Sibugay
•Bulua, Cagayan de Oro City

See poster for outlets
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3342 Series of 2006

Isuzu Crosswind drives all the way to Negros

THE CARAVAN OF 2006 ISUZU CROSSWIND vehicles, fueled by Shell Diesoline Ultra, successfully completed its journey from Manila to Negros, effortlessly carrying a select group of test drive participants through scenic locations along the way.

The event, dubbed "Isuzu Crosswind Navigates Negros," continues Isuzu Philippines Corp's long tradition of promoting local tourism while showing the public that its dependable vehicles are the perfect ones to use when transporting both people and cargo.

The team left Manila Oct. 19 and headed for the Batangas Pier, from which point they sailed to Calapan, Mindoro, via Roll-on/Roll-off (Roro) transport. After arriving in Calapan, they drove to Roxas, Mindoro, then proceeded to Caticlan in Panay via Roro again.

The following day, the group left Caticlan to motor to Iloilo and eventually to Bacolod after covering almost 500 km. Upon reaching their destination, the team used the Crosswinds to explore the northern part of Negros, checking out picturesque spots and also witnessing the famous Masskara festival.

Isuzu wanted to show Filipinos that local tourism is so much more dynamic today than it was in the past. Before, you had to spend a lot for plane fare just to reach far-flung provinces. Today, you can just take the Roro and bring your vehicle with you.

Isuzu also wanted its existing and potential customers to realize that they have the perfect vehicle in the Crosswind to take the whole family for an inexpensive vacation. It has generous interior space and ample seating for all members of the family. Because of this, the Crosswind is one of the most versatile vehicles on the market today, able to serve its owners' business requirements as well as their recreational needs.

Finally, the event was able to demonstrate Crosswind's dependability during long travels. This Isuzu multipurpose vehicle can be taken to virtually any point in the country without fear of mechanical breakdowns. Best of all, Crosswind's excellent fuel efficiency means you don't have to shell out a fortune just to tour the entire family on a vacation.

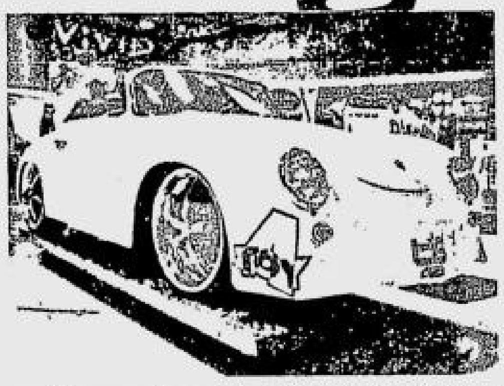
The Crosswind is able to perform all these things thanks to a powerful 2.5-liter Isuzu diesel engine. A manual-transmission Crosswind generates a maximum output of 81ps at 3,900 rpm and a maximum torque of 17kg-m at 2,300rpm. An automatic-transmission Crosswind, meanwhile, generates a maximum output of 85ps at 3,900rpm and a maximum torque of 18.9kg-m at 2,000 rpm.

The Crosswind is also the ideal touring vehicle because of Isuzu's innovative Flex Ride Suspension System that complements the Crosswind's semi-elliptical steel leaf springs at the rear. This makes for a soft, comfortable ride, even for rear passengers, while still providing a stable ride whether on pavement or on dirt.

You, too, can explore the wonders of the Philippines in an Isuzu Crosswind. Drive one home today and show your family what foreigners around the world have been dying to see.

The Isuzu Crosswind units were shipped back to Manila by Negros Navigation, the event's official shipping line.

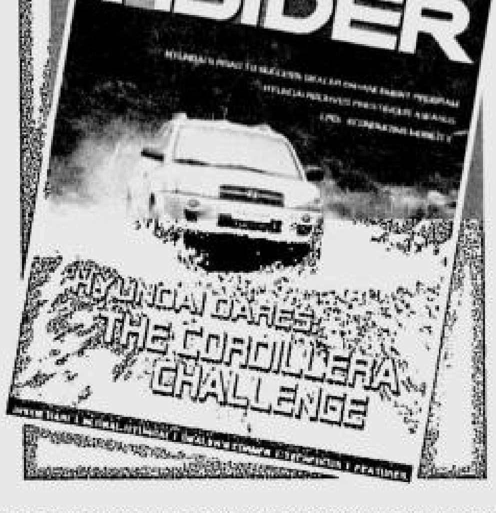
Old school Bling!



WHEEL GALLERY, THE COUNTRY'S INNOVATOR of the "Bling" phenomena, in cooperation with Glade Sport and A-Toy bodykits, set the standards once again as it dominated the recently concluded Sport Truck and Custom Car Show at the SM Megamall. With more than a dozen entries equipped with the latest TIS (Twenty Inches Strong), Dropstars and Concept One wheels as a visual treat to the viewing public. One car which stood out among the lot was the classic Porsche Speedster kit sporting a painted (black center) 20-inch TIS wheels wrapped in 30 series Nitto Neo Gen tires, Xenon Bulbs and H&R suspension. "It's a fusion of old and new, putting on a premium wheel and tire package on a rare customized favorite classic. That's what car customization is all about," states Sammy Liuson

Dropstars and TIS wheels are renowned trendsetters in the aftermarket custom wheels market in the United States. Their finely crafted and distinctive chrome spoke wheels and Phat Lip technology have made them popular SUV and luxury car accessories for rap artists and Hollywood celebrities. Dropstars and TIS Luxury Wheel Collection are its own class and carry a 2-year chrome warranty. Dropstars' unique features include optional center blades that enhance the appearance and looks of the wheels.

Wheel Gallery has the widest selection of wheels and tires from known brands such as Concept One, Nitto Tires, Bazo, and MKW. To view the complete Wheel Gallery product line, visit the showroom at 318 Kartek Center, Santolan Road, Greenhills, San Juan. For more information on how to upgrade your motoring lifestyle call 724-7176 for inquiries, or log on to www.conceptonewheels.com.



HARI RELEASES HYUNDAI INSIDER

From bringing Hyundai's quality innovations to Filipinos, to understanding and meeting the needs and demands of the market, Hyundai Asia Resources Inc (Hari), the exclusive distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the country, takes on a big leap to go the extra mile of building relationship and fostering better communication with its customers as it launches the 1st issue of its official newsletter, the Hyundai Insider. This newsletter intends to keep Hyundai's patron abreast with the latest developments undertaken by the local distributor and Hyundai Motor Co. The Hyundai Insider 1st issue is now on release.

A journey to the birthplace of BMW takes off

The kick-off party for the "Live the BMW Life" promo is set on Autozentrum BMW's Oktoberfest night to be held on Oct. 27 at the Autozentrum BMW showroom, the celebration is marked with all the things the German festival is famous for. Over-flowing Jack Daniels, Jagermeister and San Miguel Beer, a special European buffet by Old Swiss Inn and Pasteleria La Nuova, and groovy bossa house sound collage with DJ Rocky and soul jive with Drizzel await guests. Party-goers will also have the chance to take home special prizes from L'Oreal and Siemens. Finally, when the fest is over, sober up with specialty drinks from San Francisco Coffee. "Live the BMW Life" is an exclusive promotional event of Autozentrum BMW Alabang, an authorized BMW dealer. For further inquiries, call the marketing department at 772-6021 to 24.

'Ask Gibs'

Our "roving mechanic" Giby Yalung answers readers' common car concerns

Dear Gibs,

I have a 2004 Corolla Altis 1.6. My problem is the air con runs hot under the noon time sun and heavy traffic. What seems to be wrong?

Fely, Makati City

Dear Fely,

There is a big probability that your air conditioning system is suffering from high.pressure in its lines. This is a common problem under high heat and heavy loading of your compressor to the evaporators and condensers. The best way to solve this is to bring it to a certified Toyota service technician that will overhaul and clean your air conditioning system. Road dirt must have accumulated in your air conditioning system that it cannot properly conduct the heat exchange from the freon throughout the system. The moment you're through with the general cleaning, I'm sure your air con will be as good as new.

Dear Gibs,

I recently graduated from college and I'm now looking for a job in Eastwood. Since I come all the way from Bulacan, what car should I buy? I don't want anything flashy nor expensive, though. I want it to be economical and reliable.

Mark

Dear Mark,

It's very hard to answer your question. I guess the most important questions you'll have to ask yourself is what your budget would be. Should it be brand new? Should it be a big car, a small car, a van, an SUV? The list of questions never ends. First things first, though. Determine your budget and stick to it. If you have your budget, you'll be able to narrow down your choices to suit your taste.

Dear Gibs,

I recently bought an old Honda SIR with the twincam 160hp engine. I got it cheap from my cousin leaving for the States. Here's my problem: the car ran really fast and had lots of torque before I replaced the wheels with 17-inch ultra low profile tires and magwheels. What happened? How can I get more power?

Ted, Banawe

Dear Ted,

The problem is simple, The tire change aggravated the situation because the rotating mass and larger circumference of the 17-inch tires placed more drag and power losses in your drivetrain. The only solution is to put the original 15-inch factory mags back, so that your launch will be as quick as before. To answer your question on how to get more power, a cheap but effective solution is to upgrade your stock aircleaner box with a freeflow air filter system. You could probably get 1 or 2 percent more power with that alone. But if you itch for more, a good free exhaust and header combination should do the trick. When properly made, you could throttle out 10 percent more. The only problem here is that the noise will become annoying on long drives, and to your neighbors at night.

HARI DEALERSHIPS The Fastest Growing Automotive Dealer Network in the Country

When Hyundai Motor Company sought to penetrate the Philippine automotive market in 2001, the illustrious rights to market and sell their prestigious brand fell on the able shoulders of the Hyundai Asia Resources Incorporated or HARI. In a matter of 3 short years, Hyundai was hailed as the fastest growing dealer network for 2005. From last year's 20 dealers, 12 have joined the league of nationwide HARI dealers. This now brings the current total to 32 dealer outlets all over the country for this year and still growing.

Hyundai dealerships here in the country work hard at maintaining their name and pride. A strict criterion has been devised to facilitate and assure that only the qualified may bear the Hyundai logo and all that it symbolizes.

Apart from the extended reach of its dealer outlets throughout the nation, Hyundai stepped up its efforts and implemented a Dealer Enhancement Program dubbed as "The Road To Success". A standardized ladder of guidelines was set to ensure better quality, service and facilities for all Hyundai customers. This not only strengthened Hyundai dealerships' commitment towards excellence, it also paved the way for the dealers to extend their territories beyond distance to winning the favor of the people.

You can enjoy the rewarding experience of our improved services and facilities by visiting any of our 24 dealer outlets with 8 more to open soon.

METRO MANILA

HYUNDAI ALABANG
HYUNDAI BALINTAWAK
HYUNDAI COMMONWEALTH
HYUNDAI EDSA
HYUNDAI E. RODRIGUEZ SR. AVE.
HYUNDAI MAKATI
HYUNDAI ORTIGAS
HYUNDAI OTIS
HYUNDAI PASIG
HYUNDAI QUEZON AVE.
HYUNDAI SHAW BLVD

LUZON

HYUNDAI BIÑAN
HYUNDAI CABANATUAN
HYUNDAI DAGUPAN
HYUNDAI LAOAG
HYUNDAI LA UNION
HYUNDAI NAGA
HYUNDAI PAMPANGA
HYUNDAI SAN PABLO

VISAYAS

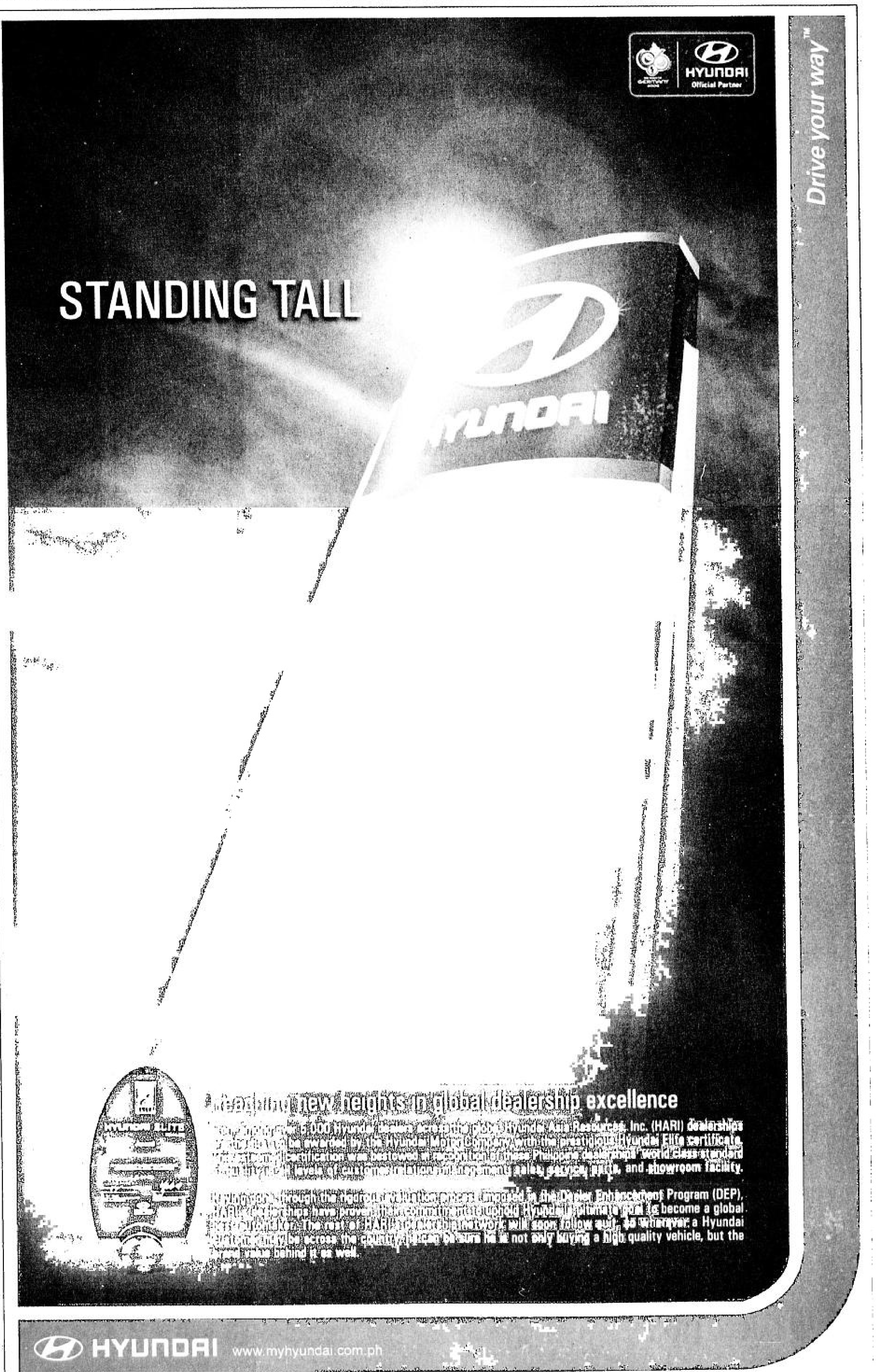
HYUNDAI CEBU
HYUNDAI ILOILO
HYUNDAI BACOLOD

MINDANAO

HYUNDAI CAGAYAN DE ORO
HYUNDAI DAVAO

Look out for the upcoming opening of:
HYUNDAI JOSE ABAD SANTOS
HYUNDAI DASMARIÑAS
HYUNDAI GLOBAL CITY HUB
HYUNDAI MANILA BAY
HYUNDAI MARCOS HI-WAY
HYUNDAI SUCAT
HYUNDAI LIPA CITY
HYUNDAI GENERAL SANTOS

Congratulations to the recipients of the Hyundai Elite Certificate:
Hyundai E. Rodriguez
Hyundai Makati
Hyundai La Union



Reaching new heights in global dealership excellence

[illegible] 5,000 Hyundai dealers across the globe, Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI) dealerships [illegible] to be awarded by the Hyundai Motor Company with the prestigious Hyundai Elite certificate. [illegible] certification was bestowed in recognition of these Philippine dealerships' world class standard [illegible] levels of customer [illegible] sales, service, parts, and showroom facility.

[illegible] through the rigorous [illegible] process [illegible] in the Dealer Enhancement Program (DEP), HARI dealerships have proven their commitment to uphold Hyundai's ultimate goal to become a global [illegible]. The rest of HARI's [illegible] network will soon follow suit, so wherever a Hyundai [illegible] may be across the country, [illegible] be sure he is not only buying a high quality vehicle, but the [illegible] behind it as well.

Authorized HARI Dealers:
HYUNDAI ALABANG – Tels (02) 800-1771, (02) 802-3574 • HYUNDAI BALINTAWAK – Tel (02) 362-0101 • HYUNDAI COMMONWEALTH – Tels (02) 951 2201 to 10 • HYUNDAI EDSA – Tel.: (02) 882-2432 • HYUNDAI E. RODRIGUEZ SR. AVE. – Tels (02) 722-0932 to 34, (02) 722-0936 to 37 HYUNDAI MAKATI – Tels (02) 830-0013 to 17 • HYUNDAI ORTIGAS – Tels (02) 723 9101 to 07 • HYUNDAI OTIS, MANILA – Tels. (02) 564-6126, 564-5958, 561-2740 • HYUNDAI PASIG – Tels (02) 672-3801 to 04 • HYUNDAI QUEZON AVE. – Tel (02) 411-2720 • HYUNDAI SHAW BLVD. – Tel (02) 723-5386, 724-2265, 725 2264 • HYUNDAI BINAN, LAGUNA – Tel (02) 520 8211 • HYUNDAI CABANATUAN – Tel (044) 463 5428 • HYUNDAI DAGUPAN – Tel. (075) 522-8888 • HYUNDAI LAOAG – Tels (077) 781-8881, 781-8888 • HYUNDAI LA UNION – Tels. (072) 712-8887 to 89, Mobile No. (0922) 310-2310 • HYUNDAI NAGA – Tel (054) 811-6119 • HYUNDAI PAMPANGA – Tel (045) 961-1184 • HYUNDAI SAN PABLO, LAGUNA Tel.: (049) 800-0413 • HYUNDAI CEBU – Tel.: (032) 346-2724 • HYUNDAI ILOILO Tel (033) 320-7022 • HYUNDAI BACOLOD – Tels. (034) 433 3510, 435 0268 • HYUNDAI CAGAYAN DE ORO – Tels (088) 855-4405 to 07 • HYUNDAI DAVAO – Tel (082) 235-2955 Soon to open: HYUNDAI BATANGAS • HYUNDAI DASMARINAS • HYUNDAI GLOBAL CITY HUB • HYUNDAI GENERAL SANTOS • HYUNDAI JOSE ABAD SANTOS HYUNDAI MANILA BAY • HYUNDAI MARCOS HI-WAY • HYUNDAI SUCAT

HYUNDAI Genuine Parts

EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTOR OF HYUNDAI:
HYUNDAI ASIA RESOURCES, INC.

Overflowing 'pogi points' for you and your wheels

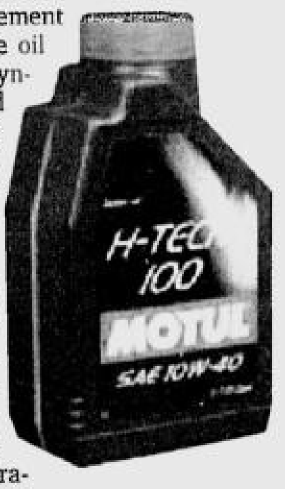
Class Act

WHAT BETTER WAY IS THERE TO complement the aggressive, rugged and classy Mercedes ML500 than a Thule load system carrier? Designed to make traveling more convenient and pleasurable for your family, Thule's line of roof racks and load carriers are geared towards active individuals and families who like to explore the great outdoors. Thule provides you with the solution to maximize the load capacity of your car, AUV or SUV. Unlike locally manufactured load carriers, Thule has an easy snap on, snap off feature which lets you install the load carriers with ease.

With Thule, there's no drilling required, it's guaranteed safe from rust, and is wind tunnel tested to aerodynamically complement the exterior design of any vehicle. Thule's line of load carriers are 100-percent machine made from Sweden and has passed the four seasons test of the ISO. Thule is the only accredited OEM designer in the local market and is a proud supplier of load carriers for brands such as Ford, Volvo, Land Rover, Nissan, Toyota, GM, BMW and Mercedes Benz.

All Thule roof racks and boxes are theft proof and water proof, which makes your personal effects safe even during the rainy season. The aerodynamic design provides a sleek look to the vehicle. Shown is the benchmark of automotive luxury, the Mercedes Benz ML500 equipped with Thule's Spirit roof box and bike rack system. For more information on how to gear up and make your vacation a more adventurous one, load up and visit its display at Toyota Pasong Tamo or the Thule-EGR Showrooms in Ortigas Avenue (744-6367) and Pasong Tamo (892-7847), or log on to www.thule.com.

Affordable performance



IN THE PURSUIT OF PROVIDING CONSUMERS WITH THE best value for money, and as a response to the requirement of automotive manufacturers for high-performance oil for their cars, Motul created the H-TEC 100 Fully Synthetic Oil. As an industry pioneer in synthetic oils and backed by the expertise of its research laboratories in Europe and Asia, Motul H-TEC 100 10W40 was developed to provide lubrication for modern day sophisticated engines, while assuring fuel savings and automotive efficiency.

H-TEC 100 is oil with excellent anti-oxidation properties preventing premature thickening and aging due to thermal stress. Its high performance anti-wear additive increases engine life duration and decreases wear by reducing engine internal frictions resulting in smooth and light acceleration. H-TEC's anti-deposit and anti-black sludge power help maintains a clean engine, and also has properties for anti corrosion, anti-foam properties that protects both the oil and engine from unwanted elements the car accumulates from usage. H-TEC 100 is suitable for standard leaded or unleaded gasoline, LPG powered cars, and for city and/or highway driving conditions.

Motul H-TEC 100 10W40 retails for P380 a liter. "We positioned this product in such range to introduce the performance of a true synthetic oil to all motorists, and for average consumers to appreciate our products," relates Carlos Gono of Autoplus Sportzentrium, the exclusive distributor of Motul oil and lubricants in the Philippines.

In formulating oils universally approved by Automotive Manufacturers (OEMs) and exceeding the standards set by Industry Classifications (API, Acea), all that comes from a Motul container is sure to be top grade, premium quality, and high performance oil. Autoplus Sportzentrium is open for product assistance and/or dealer inquiries and can be reached at 233 Edsa (southbound), Mandaluyong City or at 726-3066, 726-0399 and at e-mail info@auto-plus.com.

Electric dreams

TO COPE WITH THE TRAVAILS OF EVERYDAY LIFE, FILIPINO families are limiting their movement and adopting frugal means to avoid unnecessary constraints on the budget. As a blue collar worker who drives to work everyday, finding a solution to save both money and gasoline or how to make your car fuel efficient is a never-ending quest.

Of all the inventions that have made their way into the consumer market, the most promising seems to be the Electric Scooter Bike (E-Bike). Imported and exclusively distributed by Hummer Philippines Inc (HPI), the E-Bike looks and runs like your standard scooter. The difference lies in its power unit. Instead of a gasoline-fed engine, the E-Bike is powered by a 450-watt motor, juiced up by a 36V/12Ah battery unit. It's a plug, charge and play motorized bike.

At present, HPI has five variants of the Smartbikes: the Scootbike, which looks like your average scooter; the rugged and tough Dirtbike; the four wheeled Mini-offroader, the Segway-style Torqbike and the crowd favorite, the Race bike, which looks like a miniature sports motorcycle.

Almost most of the bikes are lightweight and has a baggage compartment at the rear. On an average speed of 20 kph, the bikes can cover 35 km on a full charge. The Smartbikes derives its power from Panasonic sealed lead acid 36V batteries. When you twist the throttle, all you can hear is the subtle hum of the electric engine. "The Smartbikes are becoming more popular with young families and housewives. You don't have to bring out the car to buy something from the corner grocery or when borrowing a film from your favorite video store a few kilometers away," says Bennett Go of HPI. SRPs of these standard looking e-bikes cost between P22,000 to P42,000.

The compact Torq bike, on the other hand, is light enough to be carried by a 10-year-old, and is the fastest among the E-bikes. With a maximum speed of 30 kph and a range of 25 km on a full charge, this Torq bike is zippy and is the most affordable among the lot at P26,000. "The Segway-style Torq bike is appropriate for hitting the malls in style, going around the factory or going around the park with your daughter as passenger and simply enjoying nature's sights and sounds," adds Go.

A local favorite is the Race bike, for those aspiring to be a Valentino Rossi or Alex Barros. This miniaturized sports bike is heavy compared to the other e-bike variants. It is also the second fastest, the most beautiful bike among the lot and the most expensive at P42,000. Going around the subdivision will surely elicit a lot of stares from passersby. The top speed is 35 kph and can cover 25 km on a full charge.

The good thing about this bike is that it has zero emissions and the noise that it emits is a faint hum coming from its battery powered unit. It is the perfect clean and green machine. Since the top speed ranges from 20 to 35kph, e-bike riders cannot be speed freaks, making it safe.

All e-bikes require a charging time of four to six hours. "HPI has a complete line of spare parts and batteries. All bikes come with a warranty. It has no engine so it does not have to be registered with the Land Transportation Office," states Go.

For those who love the environment and want to be different, the Smart-bike is the right bike for you. It comes in different colors and styles to suit your everyday requirements. Finally, here's a convenient, eco-friendly and affordable alternative solution to commuting from point A to B, without the extra gasoline expenses. For details on how to look cool and feel "electric", call HPInc at 716-0348 or 713-1998, or log on to www.hummerphilippines.com.

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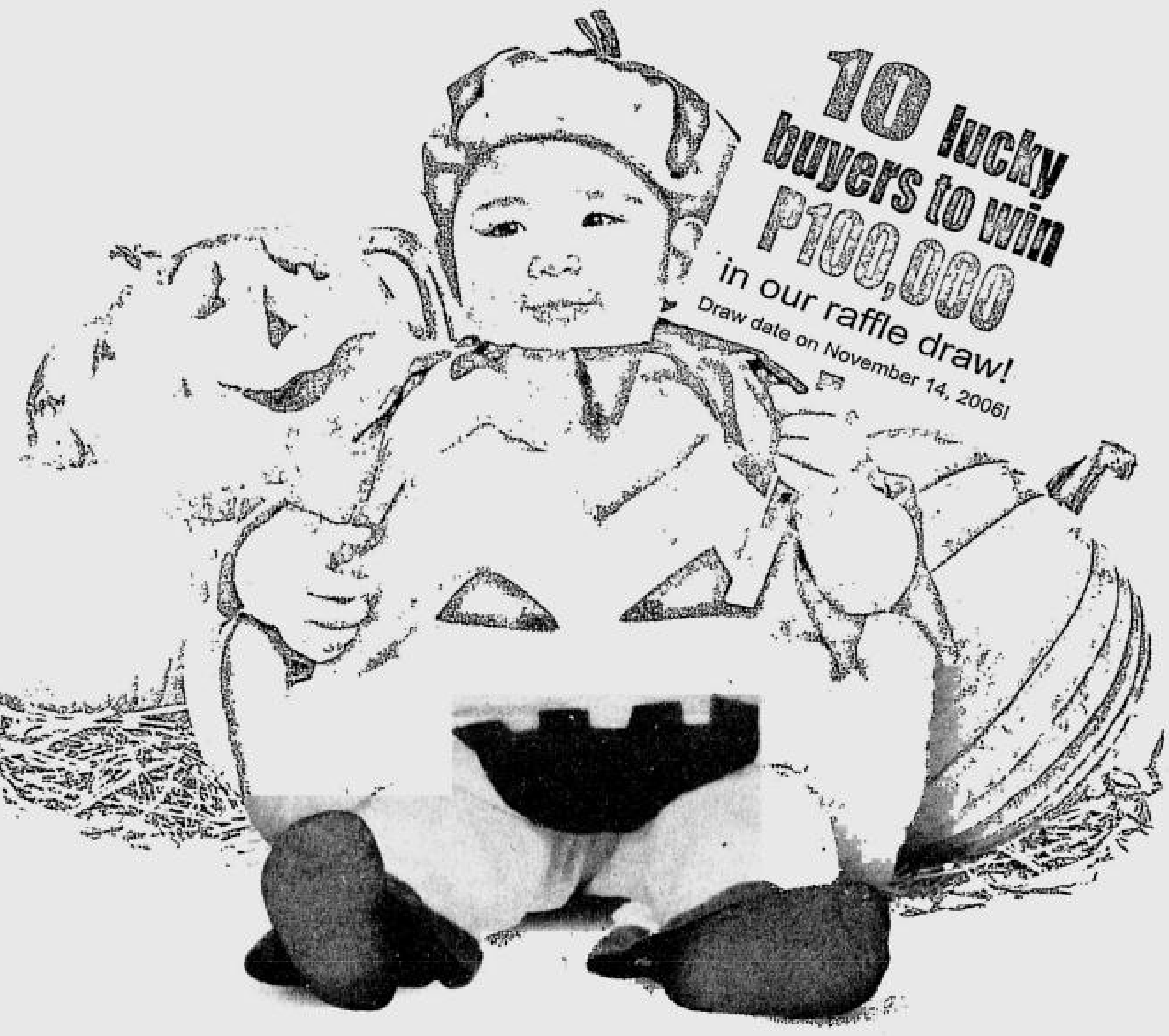
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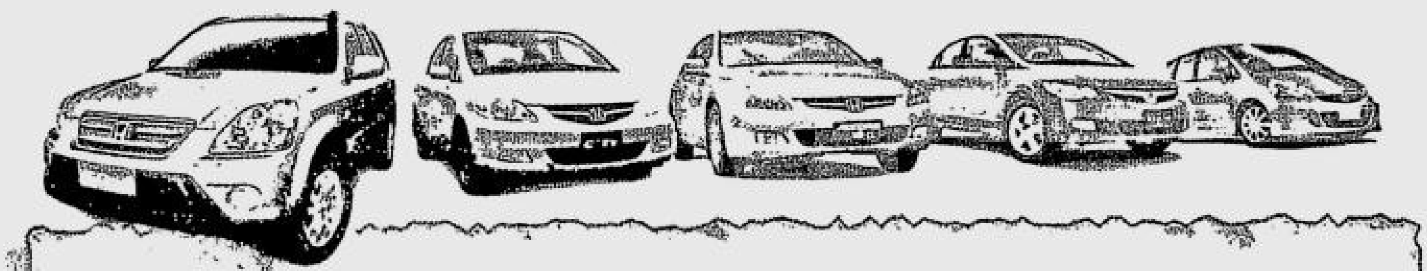

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